

# Tommy Sheppard writes to the Home Secretary about visas

## Tommy Sheppard MP calls on Home Secretary to end visa injustice as petition reaches 115,000.

The Edinburgh East MP has today written to the Home Secretary Sajid Javid imploring him to show some compassion after the wife of an Edinburgh East man was refused permission to stay in the UK because her husband did not earn enough money.

Julianna Colaianni (30), an American citizen, married self-employed plasterer Antony Duffy (30) in 2017 and since then has faced a battle to be allowed to live in the country she now calls home. Julianna's most recent visa application was rejected a few weeks before Christmas, with the Home Office arguing that Antony's income did not meet the minimum requirement.

The Home Office's decision, which Tommy Sheppard has described as a 'disgrace' left Julianna with no option but to leave the Edinburgh home she shared with Antony and return to the USA. The couple were heartbroken to be separated especially so close to Christmas and the impact on Antony, who is being treated for depression and anxiety, has been enormous; leaving him feeling suicidal.

Antony reports that he experienced major panic attacks over the Christmas and New Year period, and says that without his wife to comfort him, he was left feeling isolated and alone, crying himself to sleep most nights.

Taking the fight to the Home Office, the couple launched a petition calling for the minimum income requirement that has

kept them apart, to be scrapped. So far more than 115,000 have [signed the petition.](#)

Commenting on the case, Tommy Sheppard said: "The utter lack of compassion the Home Office has shown Juli and Tony, is yet another striking example of the Tories' 'hostile environment' policy. They were told about Antony's health problems and that he relied on Juli for emotional support; but they don't seem to care. The Tories' punitive approach to immigration is ruining lives and putting people's health at risk. Their treatment of Tony and Juli is nothing short of a disgrace."

In his letter to the Home Secretary Tommy Sheppard contends that the couple should never have been forcibly separated from each other. He calls on the Home Secretary to show some compassion and end this injustice by allowing Julianna to return home to her husband so they can start to build the rest of their lives together.

**The text of the letter is shown below :**



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