

# Another budget u-turn after SNP 'falls asleep at wheel' on business rates

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Finance secretary Derek Mackay has performed another budget u-turn as he seeks to address Scotland's business rates crisis.

Addressing Holyrood today, he said up to £40 million had been discovered within a budget that had previously been "maxed out".

It means some sectors in certain areas of the country will have their increases capped at 12.5 per cent, although many others will still have to endure the crippling increases.

Mr Mackay eventually conceded to MSPs that the cap would only be in place for one year, a move described as a "sticking plaster approach" by the Scottish Conservatives.

It's another surprise discovery of cash by the finance secretary, after he found more than £180 million to appease the Greens in budget negotiations earlier this month.

## **Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:**

"For weeks the SNP has been ignoring this issue, claiming it had no control over this process.

"In the typical style of this SNP government, it fell asleep at the wheel and only woke up when it crashed into the wall.

"We've heard on more than one occasion that this budget has been maxed out, yet once again Mr Mackay has been able to find a bit more money down the back of the couch.

"It's a desperate eleventh-hour move which will do very little to ease concerns within Scotland's business community, given that it is for one year only."

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Finance secretary Derek Mackay only made the statement to the Scottish Parliament after demands by the Scottish Conservatives:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/02/mackay-to-face-holyrood-on-business-rates-crisis/>