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The SNP's business rates hike has been slammed by its own party, after a nationalist north east branch was priced out of a hotel it's been using since the 1970s.

The Banff Springs Hotel in Aberdeenshire has been hit with a £50,000 rates rise thanks to Scottish Government changes.

As a result, it's been forced to pass on that additional cost to customers, or face going out of business.

And now it's emerged the Banff and Macduff branch of the SNP is one of those customers refusing to pay the increased rate.

It told the hotel: "The increase in hire fee is excessive to say the least. Should this apply ... I can confirm there will be no further booking and our business will be taken elsewhere."

The embarrassing revelation was raised at First Minister's Questions by Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson, as she attacked the SNP on its increasing of business taxes.

That move, along with income tax hits to be announced in the budget later, makes Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK.

However, instead of addressing the concerns shared by her north east branch, she merely said the hotel would have an opportunity appeal the rise.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"Even the SNP's own branches are opposing the hike in business rates, so perhaps it's time for Nicola Sturgeon to listen.

"These unfair increases, which see businesses like the Banff Springs Hotel paying more than double their current rates, could force closures and job losses.

"The SNP won't listen to reason or hard evidence, so perhaps it will take notice now it's been embarrassed in the Scottish Parliament.

"If the First Minister's own party doesn't support this policy, surely even she recognises it's time to do something about it."

To see the letter of complaint by the SNP Banff branch, visit:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Hotel-complaint.jpg>

The SNP organisation has been using the hotel since 1976:

<https://www.facebook.com/BanffandMacduff/posts/1104255902998301>