

Tens of thousands of businesses won't benefit from SNP rate relief plan

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Nearly 100,000 businesses facing rates rises will not benefit from the relief plan announced by the SNP Government yesterday.

Following pressure from the Scottish Conservatives, finance secretary Derek Mackay announced a one-year 12.5% cap on rates rises for the hospitality industry and for office premises in the North East.

However it was condemned as a mere 'sticking plaster' by the Scottish Retail Consortium.

And a detailed breakdown of Scottish Government figures has revealed that the relief plan will benefit just 9,530 businesses, with 98,777 not receiving any help at all from the Scottish Government.

This includes 8,899 businesses in Glasgow, with just 563 being helped by yesterday's announcement.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

"For weeks the SNP ignored the issue of business rates, and now it turns out that their proposed plan will only help a fraction of businesses.

"Around Scotland businesses are facing closure if they don't receive real help from the Scottish Government, but these figures show that the vast majority will still not receive any assistance.

"It's no wonder that Derek Mackay's statement has done little to ease concerns in the business community, especially as even those who do benefit from this plan will only see their rates capped for a year.

"We need to see meaningful action from the SNP if we are to avoid seeing these businesses going to the wall, and it's becoming clear that the SNP need to go back to the drawing board on this plan."