

The Tories are proposing their second flat rate and so ...

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The [Guardian has reported](#) that:

The British retail industry has warned that an online sales tax would push up prices for consumers after it emerged that [Rishi Sunak](#) is exploring plans for a levy to protect high street shops from mounting competition.

Against a backdrop of [rising retail job losses](#) and store closures triggered by the coronavirus crisis, the chancellor is looking at taxing internet shopping for England and Wales as a potential replacement for [business rates](#), the levy on companies based on the premises they occupy.

They added:

A consultation paper said the Treasury was “exploring the potential strengths and weaknesses of alternative property and online taxes put forward as possible replacements for rates”. According to the Times, Sunak is considering two types of online retail tax: a levy of about 2% on all goods bought online, raising £2bn a year; and a tax on consumer deliveries, which would also be expected to curb traffic and pollution.

So, for the second time in a day we have a proposal from the government for the introduction of a regressive tax. This morning [I noted their plan for a flat-rate tax to fund old-age care](#). Now we have another flat-rate consumption tax which will be charged without consideration of the income of the taxpayer, inevitably resulting in an unjust distribution of the resulting liability.

What is readily apparent is that the government has no consideration for the delivery of social justice through the tax system. Nor has it any desire to tackle inequality. If it had any concern with regard to either issue these proposals would not have been made.

There are other flaws with this proposed tax on on-line deliveries, including the fact that in due course this might be seen to be deeply prejudicial to the disabled, vulnerable people in society, people who work irregular hours and the elderly, all of whom should

be favoured by the tax system, I would have thought, but those issues just need to be noted for now. What really matters is that the government appears to be determined to use the tax system to increase inequality with the proposals that are being made at present, and that should shock anyone who thought that one of its principal purposes was to address that very issue.