

Frozen grannies won't forgive Reeves

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There are 12.6 million pensioners in the UK.

Fewer than 1.4 million of them claim pension credit.

It is thought that maybe 800,000 people do not claim this benefit but are entitled to do so.

One reason for such low levels of claim is that it is a nightmare to claim and the conditions are tight.

And, if they qualify, a single person has their income top up to just over £11,300 a year by pension credit, which is less than the state old age pension I get a year.

And this is now the level of income required to get a winter fuel allowance. The figure in question is just 54% of the national minimum wage for a 35 hour week. That is how bad it is.

So, millions of pensioners are going to suffer as a result of yesterday's utterly misguided winter fuel benefit withdrawal from more than 11 million pensioners by Rachel Reeves.

I won't, I admit, suffer hardship as a result. But millions will, and to ensure I lose she is willing to create massive real hardship.

It takes a very warped mentality to work out a justification for that when the sum saved (maybe £3 billion) could so easily been raised by charging capital gains tax at income tax rates, with the entire cost of the still quite miserly pay settlements in the public sector also being capable of being funded at the same time by that one, simple, change in the law.

It seems, though, as if Reeves wishes to cast herself as the unreformed Scrooge. She is most unwise to do so.

I hope she can live with the fact that some old people will die as a result of her decision.
I could not.