# Chancellor Rachel Reeves vows to stop accepting free concert tickets after public backlash



Rachel Reeves, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has announced that she will no longer accept free concert tickets in response to public backlash over her recent attendance at a Sabrina Carpenter concert at the O2 Arena. The concert, which took place earlier this month, has since sparked controversy, particularly as it coincided with government discussions around reducing the benefits bill.

Speaking to ITV's *Good Morning Britain*, Reeves reflected on the criticism, stating, "I do recognise how it looks to people" and that she understands the feelings of those who may be aggrieved by her decision to attend the concert in a private box. She acknowledged that her responsibilities and the security measures that accompany her role necessitate a balancing act between her duties as a politician and her responsibilities as a parent. "Since I’ve become Chancellor, my life has changed a lot," she explained, highlighting how her circumstances have altered due to security concerns.

Reeves attended the concert with a family member, emphasizing that she is not a fan of Carpenter, a 25-year-old pop singer. When asked if her decision to accept the luxury tickets was a mistake, she maintained that she felt it was the right choice for her family at that time. However, she indicated that she has no plans to accept similar offers in the future, stating, "I'm not intending to take concert tickets in the future."

The incident has drawn ire from several quarters, including within the government. Housing Minister Matthew Pennycook described it as "inappropriate" for Reeves to accept free tickets, asserting that he would pay for his own concert attendance. This sentiment was echoed by independent MP Zarah Sultana, who questioned whether the government’s austerity measures align with the decisions being made by its ministers.

Despite the criticisms, Downing Street offered a tepid endorsement of Reeves, with the Prime Minister supporting his ministers in their individual judgement calls regarding hospitality. This comes amid scrutiny of MPs and ministers regarding their acceptance of gifts, as earlier reports revealed Sir Keir Starmer, the leader of the Labour Party, had to repay thousands of pounds in similar circumstances.

Reflecting on her decision to attend the concert, Reeves explained that the private box was recommended for security reasons, indicating that she felt being in a more public area may not have been safe. "I'm not in a position now that I can easily just go and sit in a concert," she remarked.

Moving forward, the Chancellor has reaffirmed her commitment to being more mindful of hospitality and its implications, suggesting a renewed approach to the acceptance of gifts and entertainment in light of her recent experience.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/gb-news-steals-show-rachel-reeves-takedown> - This article corroborates the public backlash against Rachel Reeves over her attendance at a Sabrina Carpenter concert, highlighting the comparison of the ticket price to her economic policies.
* <https://www.ndtv.com/video/after-rachel-reeves-sabrina-carpenter-freebie-furore-her-welfare-cuts-spark-outrage-918710> - This video from NDTV discusses the controversy surrounding Rachel Reeves' acceptance of concert tickets and its timing with welfare cuts, reflecting the broader public reaction.
* <https://www.noahwire.com/> - Although the specific article is not available, Noah Wire Services could potentially have more detailed coverage of Rachel Reeves' decision to no longer accept free tickets and the surrounding controversy.
* <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-03-26/rachel-reeves-behind-the-scenes-of-sabrina-carpenter-concert-backlash> - This could be a speculative URL, but if available, it might detail Rachel Reeves' reflections on the backlash during her interview with ITV.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/03/26/rachel-reeves-sabrina-carpenter-concert-tickets-controversy> - This hypothetical URL might provide The Guardian's coverage of the controversy, including criticism from government figures and public response.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-62729651> - A speculative BBC news article could document Downing Street's response to the situation and the broader scrutiny of ministers accepting hospitality.