# Former Scottish Health Secretary Faces 27-Day Suspension and Salary Withholding Over Data Roaming Bill



Holyrood's Standards Committee has proposed a 27-day suspension and the withholding of 54 days' salary for former Scottish Health Secretary Michael Matheson. This action follows Matheson's breach of the MSP code of conduct by attempting to use public funds to cover a nearly £11,000 data roaming bill incurred while on holiday in Morocco. The bill, amassed on a parliamentary iPad, resulted from his sons using the device to stream football matches. Matheson initially maintained that there was no improper use and tried to cover the cost using office expenses and allowances.

The decision to impose these sanctions was backed by committee convener Martin Whitfield, with Conservative MSPs Annie Wells and Oliver Mundell supporting the suspension. However, SNP members Jackie Dunbar and Alasdair Allan opposed the length of the suspension. The suspension and salary withdrawal are among the most severe sanctions ever recommended for an MSP and will require parliamentary approval through a vote.

Matheson resigned from his ministerial position in February and later agreed to personally repay the costs. Despite the personal and public fallout, he has indicated no intention to step down as an MSP. The situation has prompted calls for stricter accountability measures for MSPs.