# Government Ministers Huw Merriman and Jo Churchill Step Down Ahead of UK General Election Campaign



On the first day of the UK General Election campaign, two government ministers, Transport Minister Huw Merriman and Work and Pensions Minister Jo Churchill, announced their decision not to seek re-election. Both shared their resignation letters on Thursday, featuring the House of Commons letterhead. This move follows Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s surprise call for a July 4th summer election, which has caused unrest among Conservative MPs who were anticipating an autumn poll.

Jo Churchill cited family reasons for her departure, expressing respect for the Prime Minister's demanding role. Huw Merriman did not provide a specific reason but conveyed gratitude towards his staff, local Conservative association, and the PM. Other MPs, such as Dame Eleanor Laing, Deputy Commons Speaker, and Conservative former minister Sir Michael Ellis, also announced they wouldn’t stand for re-election. Labour MP for Makerfield Yvonne Fovargue and Labour former minister Kevan Jones, citing surgery, joined the list of MPs stepping down.

The early election announcement has led to increased campaign activities, with PM Rishi Sunak making multiple stops, challenging Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer to six TV debates. Sunak's decision has disrupted several parliamentary schedules, forcing hurried legislative actions before the official "prorogation" on Friday.

Nigel Farage also revealed he would not be standing for Reform UK, focusing instead on supporting Donald Trump’s campaign in the US. Despite a slight dip in net immigration figures, the Prime Minister faces significant challenges, demonstrated by a YouGov poll showing Labour leading by 25 points.

The election campaign is now in full swing, with political leaders traveling across the UK and making strategic plans to secure voter support ahead of July 4th.