



PE1169/R

**Sarah Teather MP**

Minister of State for Children and Families

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Rhona Brankin MSP  
Convenor  
Public Petitions Committee  
T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

15 March 2011

*Dear Rhona,*

**CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1169**

Thank you for your letter of 17 December about Petition PE1169 from Margaret Forbes on behalf of Scottish Women Against Pornography seeking to introduce measures in Scotland to ensure that magazines and newspapers containing sexually graphic covers are not displayed at children's eye-level or below or adjacent to children's titles and comics and that they should be screen sleeved before being placed on the shelf. I am grateful to you for bringing this to my attention.

As you are aware, I have set up an independent review, led by Reg Bailey, the Chief Executive of the Mothers' Union, into the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood. We know parents are concerned about children being under pressure to become consumers or sexualised adults earlier than is appropriate. That is why we have said we will crack down on irresponsible advertising and marketing, especially to children, and that we will take steps to tackle the excessive commercialisation and premature sexualisation of childhood. Mr Bailey's review will make recommendations to the Government on these issues: he has already begun work and will report in May 2011.

The research that the Public Petitions Committee has commissioned into compliance with the voluntary code on display of magazines and newspapers with sexually explicit covers looks to be highly relevant to the work of the review. I am very grateful to you for sharing this work with us and Mr Bailey will consider them before he finalises his report.

*Sarah Teather*

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