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Rhona Brankin MSP
Convenor of the Committee
Public Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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December 2010

Dear Rhona,

CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS PE1098 & PE1223

Thank you for your letter of 28 October seeking an update on my discussions with Keith Brown, Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning, which I informed the Committee would take place following its meeting on 26 October. The Committee also asked for information on the plans to monitor the effectiveness of the school bus guide after its publication.

The outcome of our talk is that Keith Brown wrote on 25 November to Mike Penning, Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport, to seek a meeting to discuss devolving powers with regard to school transport to the Scottish Government. I am enclosing a copy of the letter for the Committee's information.

With regard to monitoring effectiveness, we will undertake a short survey in February 2011 to gather initial reactions and will follow that up after one year with a full review. However, as the guide will be a live website publication we will also update it as necessary if any significant issues arise in the interim, for example, should there be any change to devolved powers.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature box]

STEWART STEVENSON



Ministear airson Sgilean agus Ionnsachadh Fad-bheatha
Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning

Keith Mac Ille Dhuinn Brown BPA
Keith Brown MSP



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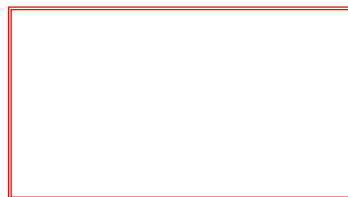
Ar faidhle/Our ref: POL/8664
25 November 2010

Dear Mike,

I am writing as a follow up to my letter of 16 June in which I set out my wish to discuss the potential for devolving responsibility for the provision of seat belts on school buses in Scotland to the Scottish Government.

I apologise for not being able to meet with you when you were in Scotland recently to give evidence to the Public Petitions Committee of the Scottish Parliament. I understand that in giving evidence you indicated that you are willing to talk to the Scottish Government about devolving powers specifically around school transport should the Scottish Government make a formal request. You also intimated that such a request would receive a positive response.

May I then, take this opportunity to formally request that we engage in discussion with regard to devolving powers with regard to school transport to the Scottish Government. I would be grateful if you could contact my Diary Secretary, Steven Turnbull, on 0131 244 5538 to arrange a meeting at our mutual convenience.



KEITH BROWN

