



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rt Hon Mark Harper MP
Secretary of State for Transport
UK Government

By email only

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40

The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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7 November 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to bring to your attention to a Petition which was recently referred to the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee on accessibility regulations for wheelchair users on bus services.

The Petition [PE1866: Introduce legislation to improve bus travel for wheelchair users](#) calls for action to ensure wheelchair users are able to face frontwards when travelling on a bus. The Petition states that the current regulations, in which wheelchair user are required to face backwards on buses, is undignified and can cause travel sickness for some disabled passengers.

The Committee's understanding is that the issue of accessibility on coach and bus services is reserved to the UK Government and Parliament, and that current rules on accommodating wheelchairs on buses are outlined in the [Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000](#). It is also our understanding that the UK Government will be reviewing the Regulations by the end of 2023.

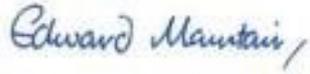
The Committee discussed the petition at our [meeting on Tuesday 1 November](#). We agreed to write to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities for more information in relation to their potential powers to regulate bus travel. We also agreed to pass on the views raised in this petition to the UK Government so that those tasked with the review of the 2000 Regulations could take note of them, as we felt the petitioner raised some important points. It would be helpful to receive a response from your department updating us on the review and on how views such as those of the petitioner are being taken into account.

The Committee also agreed that it would be helpful to have a better understanding of the current evidence base relating to safety implications for wheelchair positioning in buses and, in particular, whether facing backwards

or sideways is considered safer than facing forward. The Committee would be grateful if the response could also address this issue.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Mountain". The signature is written in a cursive style with a trailing flourish at the end.

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee