



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

Keith Brown MSP  
Minister for Transport and Infrastructure  
Scottish Government  
Edinburgh

26 January 2011

*Dear Keith,*

### CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS [PE1098](#) and [PE1223](#)

**PE1098:** *Calling for the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make provision for every school bus to be installed with three point seatbelts for every school child passenger and to ensure that, as part of a local authority's consideration of 'Best Value' in relation to the provision of school buses, proper regard is given to the safety needs of the children.*

**PE1223:** *Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to take all appropriate action, whether through amending guidance, contracts, agreements or legislation, to require local authorities to install proper safety signage and lights on school buses, to be used only when school children are on the bus when necessary, and make overtaking a stationary school bus a criminal offence.*

I refer to the discussion by the Public Petitions Committee yesterday on the above petitions. The Committee was in receipt of my letter to you of 16 December 2010 and your reply of 24 January 2011.

You will be aware of our strong desire to make progress with these petitions. That message was made clear when your predecessor Stewart Stevenson MSP appeared before us on 26 October 2010. From that very useful discussion involving Mike Penning MP we had expected, given the helpful suggestion Mike made to engage in discussion with the Scottish Government about devolving power on school bus safety, for this to have been taken forward promptly after that meeting. However, we find ourselves, three months on, with no news to report on the progress of such discussions because a meeting between you and Mike has not yet been arranged.

This is extremely frustrating not just for this Committee but also for the petitioners. Given the subject matter we expected movement on this by now, particularly given the open offer which the UK Minister made.

**Public Petitions Committee, TG.01, The Scottish Parliament,  
Edinburgh, EH99 1SP**

**Tel: 0131 348 5186, Fax: 0131 348 5088, RNID Typetalk: 18001 0131 348 5186**

[fergus.cochrane@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:fergus.cochrane@scottish.parliament.uk)

[www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/petitions/index.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/petitions/index.htm)

<http://scottishparliamentpetitions.blogspot.com/>

We are fast running out of time to give consideration to these petitions before dissolution and, as it is, we will likely need to leave them for the Session 4 Committee under our legacy arrangements. The purpose of timetabling the petitions to yesterday's meeting was to report on where matters stood and consider what to do next. Effectively, we are no further forward than three months ago.

The petitions will come to us on 22 February. The Committee would hope that, at the very least, a date for a meeting will have been arranged by then. Ideally, the meeting will have taken place and you were able to update the Committee on what came out of it and what will happen next. To maximise the time available, **could I invite an update from you by noon on Monday 21 February 2011.**

I am copying this letter for information to Mike Penning at the Department for Transport.

Yours sincerely

*Rhona Brankin*

**Rhona Brankin MSP  
Convener of the Committee**