

Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change
Stewart Stevenson MSP



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Frank McAveety MSP
Convenor of the Committee
Public Petitions Committee
TG.01
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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STL
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Dear Frank

CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS PE1098 & PE1223

Thank you for your letter of 11 February inviting me to give oral evidence on the issues raised in both these petitions. My officials have been in contact with the Assistant Clerk to confirm my attendance on 30 March at Fraserburgh Academy. I will be supported by my Road Safety Team officials, Jill Mulholland and Ian Robertson.

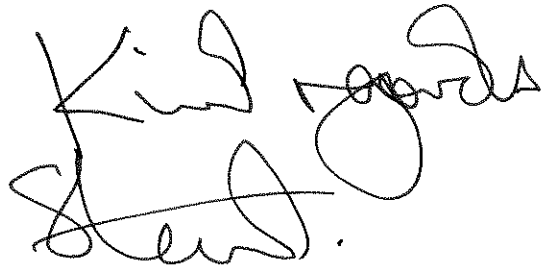
Your letter also invited a written response on specific points concerning Petition PE1098. You ask how many authorities require seat belts to be fitted in vehicles used for school transport and when we will ensure that more, and eventually all, local authorities require this.

Although this information is not collected by the Scottish Government, I understand that there are currently 10 such authorities.

However, the Scotland Act reserves legislation relating to road safety and seat belt matters to Westminster. The current Scottish legislative framework places the statutory duty upon local authorities to make appropriate school transport arrangements, having regard to the safety of pupils.

Ministers have made clear, through guidance, the policy direction in which they would wish authorities to consider proceeding. They have also taken steps to support and encourage them to review the stance which they take in respect of seat belts when the time for renewal of school transport contracts comes around.

With regard to moving these issues forward the committee will wish to note that we will shortly be publishing a framework designed to improve road safety for Scotland for all road users over the next decade.



STEWART STEVENSON