



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

15th October 2021

Jean Comblanc

RE: BUS REGULATION.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns regarding bus deregulation and specifically Early Day Motion (EDM) 382.

With regard to the EDM, notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign EDMs, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs. With that in mind, I would like to assure you I have relayed your concerns to my ministerial colleagues.

Buses are the backbone of the UK's public transport network, and account for twice as many journeys as trains, with thousands more stopping places across the country.

As you are aware, since 1986, bussing in England outside London has been deregulated. This model hasn't always worked for passengers, which is why I am pleased the Government has committed to levelling-up bus services, tackling many of the issues that EDM 382 notes, and that Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs) face.

Through the 'National Bus Strategy', the Government will ensure the skillsets of both private bus operators and LTAs are brought together in either an 'Enhanced Partnership', or through franchising agreements. This is a welcome approach, which will develop and deliver improvements for passengers and is backed by the £3 billion investment pledged in 2020. I am glad to see that all LTAs have now confirmed that they are developing one, or both approaches, and that 'Bus Service Improvement Plans' are being developed for the 31st October deadline. This strategy will prove equally beneficial in supporting decarbonisation goals, as £120 million has already been invested in zero-emission buses this year.

This investment is in addition to the £50 million already pledged to delivering the first all-electric bus town in the UK, whilst striving towards the Prime Minister's commitment to 4,000 new zero-emission buses.



As I am sure you will agree, improving our bus services to the levels that passengers deserve is of great importance. I am therefore delighted that the Government has put forward a comprehensive plan to achieve this, strengthening the powers of our LTAs and ensuring we continue towards our goal of hitting net-zero by 2050. From a local Northamptonshire perspective, I am urging that we seize this opportunity with both hands and dramatically improve bus service provision.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Pursglove'.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**