

27<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about diesel cars.

I can assure you that Ministers are not in the business of penalising drivers who use diesel cars.

In order to help improve air quality, the Department for Transport has for some time been making significant investment in a range of green transport initiatives. Since 2011, more than £2 billion has been committed to increase the uptake of ultra-low emissions vehicles and support greener transport schemes, with a further £290 million committed in 2016 to support electric vehicles, low emission buses and taxis, and alternative fuels.

I think it is important to note that these measures have focussed not just on diesel cars but also on the role that all types of vehicles can play in terms of improving air quality. For example, the Green Bus Fund involved £89million of funding helping to purchase over 1,200 green buses. Most recently, in July 2016, £30m of funding was allocated to help add a further 300 green buses to fleets. Ministers have also implemented a range of measures to encourage the uptake of alternatively-fuelled commercial vehicles. These include extending the Plug-in Van Grant to encompass heavier lorries, a £20m Future Fuels for Flight and Freight Competition, and £20 million funding to enable the freight and logistics sector to trial the very latest in innovative low and zero emission vehicle technologies in their fleets.

In order to further improve national air quality, the 2015 national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide introduced the concept of a Clean Air Zone, which is an area where targeted action is taken to improve air quality. In light of both updated information on real world emissions from diesel vehicles and the High Court judgement last year, however, the Government intends to be publish a revised air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide shortly. The consultation will address the measures needed to reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations and so I am unable to pre-empt what those measures might be.

However, I do know that the Prime Minister is very conscious of the fact that past governments have encouraged people to buy diesel cars, and I am sure that Ministers will take this into account when they look at what to do.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



**Alok Sharma MP**

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