



# Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP  
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy  
1 Victoria Street,  
London

17 May 2020

Dear Alok,

I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to pass on my thanks to your Department for the work it is continuing to do to support businesses and workers through this difficult time.

Last Thursday we heard from employer, worker and consumer representatives along with two public health experts on the challenges facing the country as it emerges from the Covid-19 lockdown. We heard a number of concerns from these witnesses in terms of reassuring employers, workers and consumers and on how these issues have been addressed elsewhere.

I would be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions:

- What action is BEIS taking to support businesses get access to the equipment required to ensure workplaces are Covid-19 secure? Will the department be taking a different approach across sectors?
- What advice is BEIS giving to workers on the best and most efficient way to deal with workplace disputes related to Covid-19 secure health and safety issues? What role will BEIS, or its agencies, take in processing these disputes?
- We heard about the different approaches that other countries are taking in respect of wearing face masks. What proactive steps are you taking in terms of advice and supply for employers, workers and consumers?
- Are you working with businesses to ensure that consumers can have confidence when returning to the high street and other retail outlets that it will be safe to do so? If this is the case, what help and support are you offering them?
- What is BEIS' position in response to calls for immediate but temporary legislation to tackle price gouging?

It is imperative that if we are to get the economy moving again, businesses, workers and consumers have confidence that risks are minimised as we loosen and exit the lockdown.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darren Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Darren Jones MP**

**Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee**