



Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State,
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
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11 October 2021

Dear Kwasi,

Downstream Oil Resilience Bill

The current fuel crisis has underlined the importance of maintaining resilient fuel supplies, and is providing valuable context for our scrutiny of the draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill. With that in mind, I would be grateful for your reflections on the powers proposed in the draft bill in the context of current events and, in particular:

- What assessment have you made of the effectiveness of the Government's general response to the crisis?
- Have the existing powers available to you been a limiting factor in the Government's ability to respond to this crisis? If so, how?
- Would the Government have responded differently to the fuel supply chain pressures, if the powers proposed in the draft bill were available to the Government now?
 - If so, what specific actions would the Government have taken, or have considered taking, which you did not take in this instance?
 - To what extent would the proposed powers in the draft bill have enabled the Government to foresee the crisis?
- What criteria did you take into consideration, and what 'threshold' did you apply, before enacting the Downstream Oil Protocol?
 - What assessment have you made of the effectiveness of the Protocol in terms of alleviating supply chain pressures and spikes in localised demand for fuel?
- What assessment have you made of the effectiveness of the sector's response to the current crisis? What specific shortcomings or gaps in the sector's response did you seek to remedy with the Government's interventions?
- How did the downstream oil sector respond to the steps the Government has taken to alleviate the crisis?
 - Did all major companies you sought cooperation from cooperate as required?
- Have downstream oil companies or sector bodies made representations to the Government about the draft bill in the context of the crisis, since the crisis began?

Yours sincerely,

Darren Jones

DARREN JONES MP
CHAIR, BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY COMMITTEE