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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

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*From the Secretary of State for Social Services*

**CONFIDENTIAL**

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP  
Secretary of State for the  
Environment  
Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3EB

6 June 1988

*Dear Nicholas,*

**PROJECT 2000 - STUDENT NURSES AND THE COMMUNITY CHARGE**

Thank you for your letter of 26 May on student nurses and the community charge.

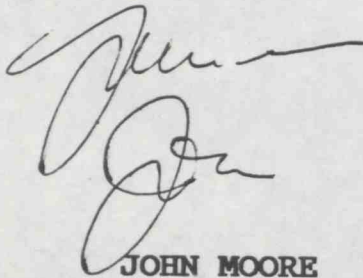
I am sorry if my need to make an announcement on Project 2000 gave rise to difficulties in relation to the timing of the Lords Committee stage of the Local Government Finance Bill. However, I entirely agree that, having announced (on the basis of advice, albeit sought late in the day, from your officials) that student nurses would probably be eligible for the 80% community charge discount in the future, the line you are suggesting the Earl of Caithness should take is the only practicable one.

It will be important to resist any commitment on the level of nursing student bursaries until more details of the shape of the new courses is known. Much depends on the length of vacations and how closely we follow the existing grant levels. I certainly do not envisage a student nurse bursary being set at a significantly different level from that for other students and in these circumstances I find it difficult to accept that the bursary should be reduced to take account of the community charge discount.

E. P.

It will be some time, however, before we can come forward with firm proposals on the level of bursaries. For now, we can say only that we will set them having regard to the level of support for other students and other factors and that we will have to await firm proposals from the statutory nursing bodies as to the duration and shape of the new courses before deciding.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, members of E(LF), the Chief Whips in the Lords and Commons and Sir Robin Butler.



JOHN MOORE

Local Gove

RATON'S

PT 10

