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Oddi wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru

From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP

28 March 1990

Handwritten initials

Handwritten notes: NBM, ACC, 2/13

HOLIDAY CARAVANS: STANDARD COMMUNITY CHARGE AND BUSINESS RATES

Thank you for copying to me your letter of ^{27th attlet} 26 March to the Lord President.

Three things, I think, are clear. First, for perfectly comprehensible reasons, we have not fully met our commitments on the treatment of caravans under the new local government finance system. Secondly, the consequences of this for caravan owners, and for the industry, are substantial, and I do not think we can reasonably ask those affected to carry this additional burden. Third, the various possible solutions, short of legislation, which officials have considered, do not come near to meeting the industry's legitimate concerns.

It follows that I see no alternative to a Bill, and I therefore support your proposal. As you say, we must seek to ensure that the scope of the Bill is narrowly drawn, and the Instructions to Counsel will no doubt reflect that. I am not insensitive to the difficulties that further legislation on local government finance will bring - but I am convinced that we would face greater difficulties in the future if we failed to legislate now.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, to other members of QL, to Norman Lamont, Malcolm Rifkind and to Sir Robin Butler.

Handwritten signature of Chris Patten

Chris Patten Esq MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
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LOCAL GOVT: Rates PT 17

