



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Caroline Spelman MP
Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

24 April 2012

Dear Secretary of State,

Air Pollution in the Capital

We are concerned that public health is being put at risk by an attempt to hide London's air pollution. Recent estimates show that over four thousand people die prematurely each year because of air pollution in London. Hundreds of thousands more suffer from asthma and breathing difficulties.

As Mayor, Boris Johnson has recently spent large sums of public money converting road sweeping equipment to spray suppressants on roads immediately around key air pollution monitoring sites in order to reduce their pollution readings.

This localised action is designed to artificially reduce the readings around the monitoring stations whilst doing nothing to affect the actual emissions of Nitrous Oxide or PM10 being released into London's atmosphere. It will do little to improve air quality for millions of Londoners who continue to breathe air that does not meet health-based legal standards. In short it perpetrates a fraud on the public health of the people of London.

In 2008 Boris Johnson said that he was "passionately committed to improving London's air quality." Yet as Mayor he has delayed vital measures such as the third phase of the London Low Emission Zone. Now after four years as Mayor it is disappointing that his only solution to tackling air pollution in London is to glue it to the road.

We felt that it was important to bring this to your attention as it is the Mayor's failure to improve air quality in London that is the primary reason for the Government being taken to the European Court and found not to comply with European law for reducing air pollution in the UK.

Air pollution is London's invisible health crisis and Boris Johnson has ignored the problem for far too long. It is about time that we had a Mayor who takes London's air quality seriously.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Gardiner, MP for Brent North

Heidi Alexander, MP for Lewisham East

Rushanara Ali, MP for Bethnal Green & Bow
Lyn Brown, MP for West Ham
Karen Buck, MP for Westminster North
Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North
Stella Creasy, MP for Walthamstow
Jon Cruddas, MP for Dagenham & Rainham
John Cryer, MP for Leyton & Wanstead
Frank Dobson, MP for Holborn & St Pancras
Clive Efford, MP for Eltham
Mike Gapes, MP for Ilford South
Harriet Harman, MP for Camberwell & Peckham
Meg Hillier, MP for Hackney South & Shoreditch
Margaret Hodge, MP for Barking
Glenda Jackson, MP for Hampstead & Kilburn
Tessa Jowell, MP for Dulwich & West Norwood
Saidq Kahan, MP for Tooting
David Lammy, MP for Tottenham
Andy Love, MP for Edmonton
Seema Malhotra, MP for Feltham & Heston
Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitcham & Morden
John McDonnell, MP for Hayes & Harlington
Teresa Pearce, MP for Erith & Thamesmead
Stephen Pound, MP for Ealing North
Nick Raynsford, MP for Greenwich & Woolwich
Joan Ruddock, MP for Lewisham Deptford
Virendra Sharma, MP for Ealing Southall
Andy Slaughter, MP for Hammersmith
Gareth Thomas, MP for Harrow West
Emily Thornberry, MP for Islington South & Finsbury
Stephen Timms, MP for East Ham
Chuka Umanna, MP for Streatham
Malcolm Wicks, MP for Croydon North