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Stewart Stevenson MSP  
Minister for Transport, Infrastructure & Climate Change  
The Scottish Government  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

14 December 2007

Dear Minister

### **ABOLITION OF BRIDGE TOLLS (SCOTLAND) BILL**

While we oppose the Government's Bill to abolish tolls on the Forth and Tay bridges, we do understand that you have a manifesto commitment to deliver this.

However, we were very concerned by your comment in the stage one debate on the Bill on 15 November that you are 'minded to accept' a Conservative amendment which would remove the power of bridge authorities to introduce road user charging on any bridge in Scotland. We consider this would be an enormously retrograde step, and we are writing to urge the Government not to support such an amendment at stage three. We have supported your proposals for an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and feel such an amendment would significantly limit your options for delivering this target.

Such an amendment would not only remove the possibility of introducing road user charging on Scotland's bridges, it would also require additional primary legislation to introduce nation-wide road user charging, as recommended by the Eddington review. The benefits of road user charging in contributing to Government economic and environment policy goals are significant. We also question how your ambitious climate change targets can be achieved without road user charging.

I hope you can assure me that the Government will not support the Conservative amendment to the Bill. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Clifton Bain  
Convenor, LINK Climate Change Task Force

Scottish Environment  The voice of Scotland's environment movement

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Sarah Boyack MSP  
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Climate  
Change  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

14 December 2007

Dear Sarah

### **ABOLITION OF BRIDGE TOLLS (SCOTLAND) BILL**

While we oppose the Bill to abolish tolls on the Forth and Tay bridges, we do understand that Labour MSPs have a clear political commitment to support it.

However, we are very concerned by a Conservative amendment to the Bill which would remove the power of bridge authorities to introduce road user charging on any bridge in Scotland. We consider this would be an enormously retrograde step, and we are writing to urge the Labour MSPs not to support such an amendment at stage three. We have supported proposals for reductions in Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions and feel such an amendment would significantly limit future policy options for delivering this target.

Such an amendment would not only remove the possibility of introducing road user charging on Scotland's bridges, it would also require additional primary legislation to introduce nation-wide road user charging, as recommended by the Eddington review. The benefits of road user charging in contributing to Labour economic and environment policy goals are significant. We also question how Scotland's ambitious climate change targets can be achieved without road user charging.

I hope you can assure me that the Labour MSPs will not support the Conservative amendment to the Bill. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Clifton Bain  
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Tavish Scott MSP  
Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Sustainable Growth  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

14 December 2007

Dear Mr Scott

### **ABOLITION OF BRIDGE TOLLS (SCOTLAND) BILL**

While we oppose the Bill to abolish tolls on the Forth and Tay bridges, we do understand that Liberal Democrat MSPs have a manifesto commitment to support it.

However, we are very concerned by a Conservative amendment to the Bill which would remove the power of bridge authorities to introduce road user charging on any bridge in Scotland. We consider this would be an enormously retrograde step, and we are writing to urge the Liberal Democrat MSPs not to support such an amendment at stage three. We have supported proposals for reductions in Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions and feel such an amendment would significantly limit future policy options for delivering this target.

Such an amendment would not only remove the possibility of introducing road user charging on Scotland's bridges, it would also require additional primary legislation to introduce nation-wide road user charging, as recommended by the Eddington review. The benefits of road user charging in contributing to Liberal Democrat economic and environment policy goals are significant. We also question how Scotland's ambitious climate change targets can be achieved without road user charging.

I hope you can assure me that the Liberal Democrat MSPs will not support the Conservative amendment to the Bill. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Clifton Bain  
Convenor, LINK Climate Change Task Force

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