



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019.

Dear Constituent,

A Response to the Better Deal for Animals Campaign

Thank you for contacting me about animal sentience and the #Betterdealforanimals campaign.

First and foremost, it is clear that animals are sentient beings who can feel pain and suffering, and I would like to reassure you that strong action is being taken to reduce their risk of harm.

The UK Government is committed to making any necessary law changes in a rigorous and comprehensive way to ensure animal sentience is legally recognised after Brexit. This also includes ensuring the UK has an effective means of making sure that animal sentience is reflected in future policy decisions. However, it will be down to the Scottish Government to formally recognise this in future Scottish regulation, and to decide whether to regard the welfare needs of animals when formulating and implementing government policy.

Unfortunately, it appears Scotland is falling behind when it comes to the protection of animals. With among the lowest animal cruelty sentences in Europe, there is very little deterrent. I believe Scotland must at least match the five-year maximum term being legislated for in England, and go further when it comes to education and tackling problems like illegal puppy farming. After my colleagues in the Scottish Parliament warned they would use the opposition majority to change legislation, the Scottish Government announced a consultation on animal welfare, which has now begun.

My MSP colleagues have worked tirelessly to promote animal welfare issues such as: the better protection for police dogs and other service animals, known as Finn's Law; the improvement of pet shops licencing; and the compulsory use of CCTV in abattoirs.

I am pleased that the Scottish Government has now agreed to implement these proposals, which I truly hope will be delivered.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alister Jack".

Alister Jack DL MP
Dumfries and Galloway constituency.

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