



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2019.

Dear Constituent,

**A Response to the Trade Agreement Concerns Campaign**

I understand your concerns regarding standards in future trade agreements, the scrutiny of such agreements, and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms. However, I would like to assure you that such concerns are unfounded.

Maintaining safety and public confidence in the food we eat is of the highest priority. Without exception, imports must meet all the relevant UK product rules and regulations. Any future trade agreements must work for UK farmers, businesses, and consumers, and uphold food safety, animal welfare standards, and environmental protection. In addition, when it comes to products imported to the UK - quality, safety and performance will continue to be paramount. With regard to scrutiny of future trade agreements, the Government is committed to transparency and scrutiny of its trade agreements. The Government has committed to Parliament scrutinising our future trade arrangements. Parliament will be able to inform negotiations, be regularly updated, and will ultimately play its role in the ratification of any new Free Trade Agreement through the process set out in the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

The Government is reflecting on all the changes made to the Trade Bill in the House of Lords and the approach to take in the House of Commons. I look forward to debating the Bill when it returns.

Finally, with regard to ISDS mechanisms, this is a complicated subject and I can understand why there is some confusion surrounding them. The right of governments to regulate in the public interest is protected in investment chapters in free trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties. The UK has more than 90 bilateral investment treaties in place with other countries and there has never been a successful ISDS claim brought against the UK, nor has the threat of potential claims affected the Government's legislative programme.

On the specific issue of public healthcare, the Government is committed to protecting the NHS. The NHS is safeguarded by specific exemptions in all EU trade agreements and, as our country leaves the EU, the UK will continue to ensure that rigorous protections for the NHS are included in all trade agreements it is party to.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Alister Jack DL MP**  
**Dumfries and Galloway constituency.**