

PE1467/H

Petitioner Email of 2 September 2013

Dear Member,

I am writing to you in your capacity as a member of the Public Petitions Committee who will tomorrow be considering my petition to encourage the Scottish Government to establish a Scottish Living Wage Employer Recognition Scheme. Since I wrote to the Committee on 21st August, two pieces of written evidence were received from COSLA and the Scottish Living Wage Campaign which raise a number of points not covered in my submission. I would like to take the opportunity to comment on these points ahead of the Committee's consideration of my petition tomorrow morning.

I believe that a Recognition Scheme established by the Scottish Government has a number of features which would make it worth pursuing as a stand-alone system for accrediting and recognising Living Wage employers in Scotland. It would be a powerful statement of the Scottish Parliament and Government's ambitions to encourage a greater roll-out of the Living Wage in Scotland beyond the public sector, and would be compatible with devolved competencies and EC Directives. I feel that this would perfectly complement the Scottish Government's ambition to make Scotland the best place to grow up. One in four children in Scotland live in poverty, with a third of them in working households. Action to encourage more employers to adopt a Scottish Living Wage policy must be taken as a priority.

A Scheme run by the Scottish Government would be free to employers to use, which would remove barriers for small businesses and voluntary organisations in Scotland presented by existing schemes which charge an administration fee to join. It would have the advantage of providing an incentive for employers who operate solely in Scotland. It would also allow for any future variance between the Scottish Living Wage rate and the level for the rest of the UK – for instance, the Scottish Local Government Living Wage is set at £7.50, greater than the Living Wage figure for the UK outside London (£7.45).

I hope my comments will be useful to the Committee in considering my petition, and hope that the Committee will remain convinced of the benefits of the Scottish Living Wage and encourage the Scottish Government to establish a Scottish Living Wage Recognition Scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew McGowan

On behalf of the Scottish Youth Parliament