

**P-06-1338 Extend the bus emergency scheme and develop national bus recovery plan –
Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 25.08.23**

To whom it concerns,

Thank you for sending me a copy of the letter from the Deputy Minister to the Chair of the Petitions Committee.

Can I thank Committee members for agreeing to send my follow up questions to the Deputy Minister following their last meeting.

A few days ago we heard news that up to 25% of bus routes in Wales may be lost, and that 10% have already been axed this summer. Victoria Lloyd, Chief Executive of Age Cymru, released a statement the following day outlining the impact this level of cuts may have on older people in our communities.

Despite this stark reality facing bus users, the letter from the Deputy Minister reads as though we are not witnessing a crisis. He mentions funding, but we know this isn't enough. He mentions a campaign being planned, but we know this should have been started many months ago. He mentioned franchising, but the legislation hasn't even been introduced yet!

I catch the bus every day. I rely on adequate public transport. I don't have the luxury of alternatives or being able to wait for a campaign to eventually start or for legislation to be enacted.

I speak to people on my bus who fear what this may mean for their jobs, their ability to socialise, access services or attend education, training or volunteering. My usual driver said he fears what this will mean long term for his job as he thinks the service I get on every day won't be around much longer.

I could write about the impact buses have had on the wellbeing of my son and my own confidence for that matter, but I don't want to bore you.

I just ask that each committee member considers what more you can do to support bus services in your constituencies or regions - not just through questions to Minister's or statements in the Siambr, but by getting on your local buses now and then (if you don't already) and encouraging others to do the same.

In summary, I'm disappointed by the Minister's response but I am grateful for the way the committee has provided an opportunity for these questions to be asked.

Diolch yn fawr