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HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR CAMBERWELL AND PECKHAM  
SHADOW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT  
SHADOW DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Louise Ellman MP  
Chair, Transport Committee  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

5<sup>th</sup> December 2013

Dear Louise,

**Re: Transport Select Committee's call for evidence on Cycling Safety**

I'm very pleased that you are holding this inquiry into cycle safety and I'd like to take the opportunity to set out my concerns and proposals for change. It is an issue of great concern to people in my constituency of Camberwell and Peckham who use cycling for work and leisure, and was especially brought to light on the 17<sup>th</sup> November by the tragic death of a cyclist in Camberwell who was hit by a lorry at the junction of Albany Road and Camberwell Road.

Richard Muzira was the sixth cyclist to die on London's roads within a fortnight. First and foremost his death is a tragedy for his family and friends but six deaths in the same month is a warning sign that we must do something to protect cyclists.

Safe cycling is good healthy exercise, is cheaper than public transport and cuts congestion and pollution. Goods need to be delivered in London and that means having lorries and HGV's on our roads alongside cyclists and other road users.

Cyclists will sometimes make decisions on the road that are risky for themselves and also for pedestrians – jumping red lights, not signalling, or moving across fast-moving traffic in an unexpected way. But we can't solve the problem of cycling safety by blaming cyclists. Nor should we stigmatise all lorry drivers. What we need is sensible, evidence based solutions.

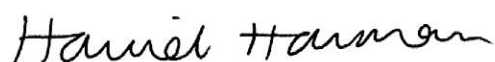
I strongly back Southwark Council's call for a ban on HGV's for one hour during the morning and evening rush hours – a 'safe cycling hour' without lorries on the roads. One in five cyclist deaths involve lorries even though lorries are only 6% of traffic on the roads. Fourteen cyclists have died this year; nine involved with lorries or HGV's. I'm concerned to hear that some people are no longer cycling to work because of concern for their safety. A rush hour lorry ban would give confidence to people who are not cycling now because of their safety.

I also support Labour's proposal for a voluntary HGV Safety Charter. The charter would require HGV operators to sign up to a range of safety measures. By the middle of next year, we want to see all new and existing HGVs fitted with safety measures including rear-view cameras, reversing alarms and day time running lights.

I think it would be a good idea that by the end of 2017 all HGVs are fitted with in-cab warning systems for drivers, side-guards and blind-spot elimination devices. The voluntary charter is an immediate step that would be backed up by legislation making these safety measures compulsory for HGVs, if Labour wins the next election.

I hope that your inquiry and report will be important for encouraging and helping cyclists, and making sure they don't have to pay with their lives.

Best wishes,



Harriet Harman

CC:

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Jim Fitzpatrick MP  
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Karen Lumley MP  
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Karl McCartney MP  
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