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12 March 2008

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your letter of March 7 2008 regarding the Climate Change Bill, asking why I have not signed Early Day Motion 736.

I am afraid that in my position as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Chief Whip I am in the same position as a Government Minister in that I am unable to sign any EDM irrespective of its content.

I sympathise with your call to ensure that the Climate Change Bill is effective as possible and you will no doubt be aware that whilst the Bill provides for at least a 60% reduction in CO2 by 2050, we recognise that we may need to go further. That is why the Prime Minister announced on 19 November 2007 that we will ask the new, Independent Committee on Climate Change, to advise us whether our own domestic target should be tightened up to 80 per cent. I await this decision with interest.

You ask about emissions from the aviation and shipping sectors, an issue of concern for many people. The Bill provides that these emissions could be included in the UK's carbon budget once international agreement is reached on how to attribute these emissions to individual countries. Currently there is no international agreement on this complex issue. For example, we need to decide



to allocate emissions for a flight from London to Sydney by a third country's national airline which stops to refuel in Dubai, or for a ship which sails from Japan to the UK but which takes on fuel from a tanker in international waters.

We're pushing for international agreement on this, and most important of all we're pressing for aviation to be included in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. To ensure that we can take a fully-informed decision on whether to include these emissions in our targets, we will also ask the Committee on Climate Change for its independent advice on the impact of including aviation emissions in our targets.

On the matter of annual targets, the Bill will set a long-term legal framework for reducing emissions and make us the first country in the world to put carbon reduction targets into law. The reason we have opted for 5 year carbon budgets with annual reporting is that annual emissions will vary, due to an unexpected cold spell or changes in fuel prices, for example.

I hope this sets out my position clearly. Thank you again for contacting me about this important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah McCarthy-Fry".

**Sarah McCarthy-Fry**  
**Member of Parliament for Portsmouth North**