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Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-506
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/03607/13

William Powell AM

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

11 November 2013

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter of 23 October enclosing details of the Petition received from Mark Griffiths about the Welsh Government's concessionary bus and train travel schemes.

Our free bus travel scheme remains one of the Welsh Government's flagship achievements. Currently, there are more than 700,00 pass holders throughout Wales who not only benefit from being able to undertake their day-to-day activities without worrying about the cost, but also use the buses to boost their wellbeing. In doing so, there are fewer cars on the roads, reduced traffic congestion and lower emissions.

The qualifying criteria removes any stigma which may be attached to pass holders. Means testing would be potentially expensive and could run the risk of existing pass holders returning to relying exclusively on their cars for personal travel.

I have no plans to extend the scheme as the petitioners suggest. However, I am sympathetic to the principle and will keep this issue under review subject to additional funding becoming available.

For the rail network, we have been providing a complementary concessionary service where there is limited bus provision on some lines. More detailed information of these services can be found at:

<http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/concessionarytravel>

Arriva Trains Wales offer several different railcards offering discounted travel for passengers. More information can be found at:

<http://www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk/ATWRailcards/>

As part of our Programme for Government, the Welsh Government is committed to providing affordable and accessible public transport services through the Regional Transport Consortia and local authorities. I am reviewing the commitments in the current National and Regional Transport Plans in the light of future budgets and the need to ensure alignment with economic development priorities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. I. Jones', is located below the main text block.