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### **Live Animal Exports:**

I have long supported a ban on exporting livestock from Great Britain for fattening and slaughter, which the Bill contained. I know long journeys on which animals suffer are not acceptable to the British people.

I am extremely disappointed the Government has dropped the Kept Animals Bill. Over 18 months had passed since it was last scrutinised by Parliament and reassurances were given that it would be returned to undergo further debate. The Government now says it will take forward the Bill's contents as single-issue pieces of legislation, which will likely further delay protections.

The decision to drop the Bill is not what the public, our dedicated animal welfare charities or I want. It represents a profound setback for animal welfare in the UK, and it is innocent animals who will suffer the consequences.

I supported an Opposition motion to bring back the Bill as written to Parliament, but the Government voted this down.

I will always support action to achieve the strongest possible animal welfare policies. All animals deserve protection and I believe it is wrong to promise tougher legislation if promises are then not seen through.

Although live exports may have declined over the years, I am afraid in recent years we have still seen animals exported, particularly for fattening. What many of those animals' experience in being transported for a long time is a real concern, putting them in danger of food and water deprivation, overcrowding, and lack of rest. Exporting animals has always risked their slaughter in conditions below UK standards. While we must ensure the system is put in place properly and is supported by our farming sector, I want to see an end to such exports.

There is also an obvious truth that long journeys in the UK to slaughterhouses also harm animal welfare. Nationwide, the number of local abattoirs has been significantly reduced, meaning many farmers have little choice but to send livestock long distances for slaughter.

I want the Government commit to re-establishing a uniform network of slaughterhouses to end the suffering of animals undertaking extensive journeys within the UK.

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