



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**Alex Rowley MSP**  
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Scottish Government  
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*11 December 2023*

Dear Minister,

**BUS FARE CAP**

I am writing to follow up on my question to you in the Chamber on 30 November (S6O-02827), regarding how the Scottish Government intends to increase the use of buses in Scotland.

As you know, I welcome the steps the Scottish Government has taken to introduce a concessionary fare scheme for bus users under the age of 22 but I am concerned about the impact a lack of support for bus users aged 22-59 is having on their ability to access bus services at a time when increasing bus fares are colliding with the cost-of-living crisis.

I have previously raised the UK Government's move to introduce a bus fare cap of £2 per journey across England to support bus users during the cost-of-living crisis and my question to you on 30 November was to ask if the Scottish Government would be willing to examine the case and cost for a similar fare cap in Scotland that would benefit all bus users.

I accept and understand the point you made in response that we are experiencing a very serious budget situation, but I would suggest that many people across Scotland are similarly faced with serious budget situations of their own. We need more people to make the move from private car usage to public transport options like buses, but we are unlikely to convince the majority of people to make this move when the option of travelling by car remains cheaper than public transport alternatives.

I have also welcomed the Scottish Government's move to suspend peak rail fares for the benefit of all rail users and believe it is this approach that is required for bus fares.

I note that in your response to a supplementary question from Graham Simpson MSP, you suggested that in order to cap bus fares across Scotland, we would need to centralise all decision making on transport. I am not sure why that would be the case as the Scottish Government was able to introduce the concessionary bus fare schemes it is so proud of without such a requirement.

I strongly believe that if we intend on succeeding in achieving net-zero and hitting Scotland's rightly ambitious targets while providing the support Scottish people across the country need, we must make public transport a viable, accessible, and affordable option for as many people as possible.



I am aware that the Scottish Government intends to report on the Fair Fares Review by the end of this year and I am very much looking forward to engaging with this when it is published. I would, however, request that the Scottish Government examines the case and the cost of introducing a fare cap in Scotland that would benefit all bus users given the Scottish Government's previous success in introducing schemes similar to this, such as the under-22s concessionary scheme. I realise that budgets are tight but knowing the cost of a flat cap that would help so many people across the country would give us the opportunity to work together to look at how this might be funded.

I would be more than happy to work with the Scottish Government to this end on a cross-party basis as I truly believe that this needs to be explored if we are serious in achieving our net-zero targets and benefiting all bus users in Scotland.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Alex Rowley MSP

