

Name of MP

Treasury Select Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Date August 2019

Dear X

We are writing to you to thank you for your work to date on the Committee's current Inquiry into the impact of business rates.

The issue of business rates is a matter of critical importance to all commercial occupiers and owners, with their level, structure and administration creating a severe burden on business. Business rates are often cited as a major barrier to growth and investment for retailers, hospitality businesses, property investors, manufacturers, and increasingly local councils as direct and indirect investors in commercial property.

That is why we all strongly welcomed the announcement of the Committee's Inquiry and submitted detailed evidence both in writing and in person to support the Committee's deliberations on this pressing issue.

We note that following the election of the new Prime Minister, several members of the Committee have moved on to roles in Government, and that you will soon elect a new Chair as well as gain new members who will determine how to proceed with all current Inquiries.

With high streets and town centres facing enormous challenges, and business looking to Government for support at a time when concerns over the UK's departure from the European Union are hindering investment and confidence, we believe that it could not be a more important time for the Committee to publish its views on the operation of the business rates system. The Committee's recommendations carry great weight with Ministers and officials, and it is vital that, notwithstanding the debate over Brexit, crucial domestic policy issues are not obscured. The prompt publication of a report would mean that it could be taken into consideration as part of the government's Autumn Budget considerations - we ask that the Committee gives serious consideration to finalising and publishing the report into the impact of business rates as a matter of urgency.

We are sending this letter collectively to underscore the value that we attach to your valuable work on this issue over the past four months or so, and to emphasise the importance of seeing it reach a conclusion that can influence the ongoing debate on reform of business rates.

A copy of this letter is being sent to every current committee member.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Dickinson, Chief Executive, British Retail Consortium

Adam Marshall, Director General, British Chambers of Commerce

Rain Newton-Smith, Chief Economist, Confederation of British Industry

Melanie Leech, British Property Federation

Edward Cooke, CEO, Revo

James Lowman, Chief Executive, Association of Convenience Stores

Andrew Goodacre, CEO, British Independent Retailers Association (Bira)

Federation of Small Business

Kate Nicholls, CEO, UKHospitality

Brigid Simmonds, Chief Executive of the British Beer & Pub Association