Dear NAME OF MSP,

I am writing as your constituent/from a business in your constituency regarding the Scottish Government’s guidance to employees and businesses to work from home (if possible) from 17 January 2022, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I work as a reseller/manufacturer/wholesaler etc in the office products industry – a sector worth £10bn to the UK economy. I wish to bring to your attention the impact of the work from home instruction on our business and the office products industry more widely.

Our industry – like many, including town and city centre hospitality – relies on the occupation of offices. When employees work from home, the consumption of office products falls dramatically, to typically around one third of usual levels. Many companies in this industry have only survived thus far due to the UK Government schemes that were available, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans and Bounce Back Loan Scheme. The former is no longer in operation and those who took out the latter are now being expected to repay those debts.

In my own business…sentence or two regarding what the business does, number of employees (if relevant) and current business conditions/ impact of previous lockdowns.

I understand the need for public health protection, especially in the light of the new variant and the possible reluctance of some employees to work in office environments (although many of our customers have gone to great lengths to make their offices safe). However, it is crucial that the industries most affected by the current measures are supported by Government, for example the support packages that have just been announced for Scotland’s tourism and hospitality industries.

In addition to the work from home guidance and corresponding loss of trade, rising energy and other costs are hitting hard. For companies in office products, who are already struggling to recover for all of these reasons, the current instructions are a huge setback.

We are working with our trade association, the British Office Supplies and Services Federation (BOSS), who are also bringing this matter to the attention of the UK Government and the Welsh Senedd. I would like you as my MSP to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance & the Economy and to the Cabinet Secretary for COVID Recovery to ask that they consider a support package for some of the less visible, but no less affected, industries including office products and services.

I’d be very happy to discuss this further if helpful.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Name

Address of home or business