

Public Petitions Committee Review of PE812 upholds many of *Stirling Before Pylons*' concerns on the adverse health effects of High Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines (HVOTL) with the latest response from the Scottish Government

Yesterday one of the Parliament's longest standing public petitions (PE812) was reviewed again.

There was tremendous support by Committee members for the concerns raised by Caroline Paterson of *Stirling Before Pylons* at the latest response from the Scottish Government.

Discussion can perhaps still be viewed live on parliament website?

Nanette Milne MSP requested further investigation into the reduced undergrounding costings as a mitigating option - where there have been great advances in recent years, particularly in Europe.

Nigel Don MSP questioned the Scottish Government's dismissal of health concerns in the light of recent scientific papers and also questioned the Health Protection Agency's competence in addressing these. He said that history has taught us to take heed of such warnings, and feared that there was a lack of communication between the HPA and other review bodies which strongly advocate precautions, a sentiment supported by Robin Harpur MSP. Bill Butler MSP questioned whether the government is really confident that there are no long term risks and referred to the latest studies showing an increased risk of Alzheimers. He requested that the Committee ask the Scottish Government which other European countries are taking a different view on this issue and legislating precautions. John Farquar Munro MSP said that in the light of all the evidence showing HVOTLs to present a serious hazard to public health, the precautionary principle should apply, and John Wilson MSP referred to the WHO's recognition of HVOTLs presenting a potential health hazard and felt that in the light of lessons learned from asbestos and nuclear power stations such lessons should be heeded and we need assurance that the HPA is addressing the scientific evidence from around the world and erring on the side of caution.

Caroline Paterson who presented the petition on behalf of *Stirling Before Pylons*: "I am very glad that Committee members have clearly taken on board the key concerns raised in my latest response to the Scottish Government's claim "that existing provisions to control the possible public health effects from exposure to ELF electromagnetic fields from the electricity distribution system are adequate and suitable". By questioning out-of-date statements made by the statutory advisor to government (the HPA) we may finally be approaching an open discussion of the latest research in this field. This is extremely important and timely for those people living along the line of the proposed Beaully to Denny 400kV HVOTL, which is currently with ministers pending a decision. I hope Ministers will now listen to the scientific evidence and meaningful precautions being legislated on by other countries, before coming to a decision. Not to do so, will result in thousands of lives being threatened for generations to come - and ironically all in the name of sustainable Renewable Energy generation."

Caroline Paterson

Please contact on 01786 462567