



MODEL LETTER TO MPs

Your address

xxxxxxxxxx

xxxxxxxxxx

xxxxx MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Date xxxxxx

Dear xxxxxxx,

LIGHTEN UP – CAMPAIGN TO CUT DOWN RISK OF BACK INJURIES FOR BAGGAGE HANDLERS

I work as a baggage handler in xxxxxxxxxx airport and am writing to you to ask your support with an important issue that affects me in my job.

My union, Unite is campaigning on my behalf to get airlines to introduce a reduced standard of 23 kg maximum weight limit for individual bags checked-in for travel on aircraft. The aim is to reduce the unacceptably high levels of back and other muscular skeletal injuries suffered by thousands of baggage handlers – we are five times more likely to suffer muscular skeletal injuries than any other worker in the UK.

Two years ago the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Aviation Industry Group recommended the reduction to the weight of checked-in baggage from 32 to 23 kilograms per item as one of a number of measures aimed at reducing the risks of injury to handlers. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has recently joined the call. Unfortunately, the airlines have chosen to ignore the HSE and IATA claiming to support our initiative but arguing that they can only do so as part of a UK industry wide approach. As a result no action has been taken on any risk reduction recommendations over the past two years while injuries to my colleagues continue.

I would like you to put pressure on the government to act and force the HSE to implement this alongside other identified measures by way of regulation, ensuring the introduction of a uniform standard across the UK aviation sector. We believe the HSE are failing in their statutory duty to protect the health of baggage handlers. We are also calling on government to fund a public awareness campaign to encourage the travelling public to 'lighten up', assisting our campaign on worker health and further, reducing of the sector's carbon footprint.

I would like to meet with you on **Wednesday 25 January at the House of Commons** when I will be attending a lobby my union is organising on this issue. Can you let me know if you are able to meet me on this day. If not could I arrange to see you at one of your surgeries. I would also like you to sign the attached EDM which is being sponsored by Karen Buck MP.

Yours sincerely,
xxxxxxx

Where there are 'X's' replace with relevant information on the attached letter.
This letter is available on www.unitetheunion.com/lightenup

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London
SW1A 0AA

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