

P-05-853 No to any Closure of Junction 41 – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 07.01.19

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional comments that may be considered by the committee on 15th January. The correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Transport does provide some clarity as to the reasoning behind the actions of the Welsh Government but I note that it does not rule out implementing the precautionary measure as identified in the WelTag3 report of closing the west bound on-slip road at junction 41 as a means of reducing nitrogen dioxide emissions along the section of the M4 between junctions 41 & 42. Therefore it is clear that the petition still needs to be considered as this option is live. I also appreciate that fact that officials from the Welsh Government have met with my local Assembly Member, David Rees, to discuss the concerns raised by the public in Port Talbot (and especially within my own electoral ward of Baglan) of the possible closure. The details provided in those meetings and the feedback from David Rees has given a greater understanding of the

reasons behind the decision of the Welsh Government for undertaking this survey and the need to reduce nitrogen dioxide emissions from vehicular traffic. However, there is an urgent need for the Welsh Government to understand the consequences of increasing vehicle emissions along local roads if they apply the precautionary measure and closing the west bound on-slip of junction 41. The increased levels of nitrogen dioxide on these roads will have a greater impact upon the health of local people, including children who walk along those roads to get to the two new schools that have been built within meters of the A4161, thereby having a greater detrimental effect than leaving all of the junction open. I would urge the committee to seek information from the Welsh Government as to what assessment has been undertaken with regard to the impact of increasing vehicle emissions along local roads if this precautionary measure was to be implemented. There should be sufficient evidence available from the previous trial closure of the same element of junction 41 which the Welsh Government introduced earlier this decade.

Regards

Carol