

7th June 2022

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting me about the welfare of farm animals.

I take the welfare of all animals very seriously. I know that the Government is committed to maintaining our world-leading farm animals welfare standards, and Ministers will deliver a series of ambitious reforms, as outlined in the Action Plan for Animal Welfare.

One of the ways in which the Government wishes to improve the welfare of farm animals is strengthening protections against animal confinement, and I understand that the Government is actively exploring options to phase out the use of cages in farming, including enriched cages for laying hens, farrowing crates for pigs, and cages for breeding pheasants and partridges.

Furthermore, the Government's Animal Health and Welfare Pathway will prioritise areas for further improvement in the health and welfare for pigs, cattle, sheep and poultry. One of the Pathway's priorities will be to support a transition away from enriched cages for laying hens.

More broadly, Ministers are taking action to improve the health and wellbeing of farm animals through the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, which will ban exports of livestock and equines for slaughter and fattening.

I am aware of an e-petition calling for the end to the use of cages for farmed animals and I note your invitation to attend the debate in Westminster Hall on 20 June. I will of course try to attend, subject to my Parliamentary diary allowing.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Alok Sharma MP