

Richard Burden MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON, SW1A 0AA

### **Puppy smuggling**

There is an old saying that that a dog is “man’s best friend.” Today we may use more gender-neutral language but, however you put it, there is no doubt that dogs are incredibly loyal animals, who show empathy and affection for their owners and the people around them. Several constituents have written to me on the issue of puppy smuggling, where very young dogs are imported into the UK – often through an abuse of the Pet Travel Scheme. Dogs at a young age are being separated from their mothers, causing them long term damage.

The Pet Travel Scheme allows for pets to travel with their owners within the EU, and for the most part is used legitimately. It ensures owners do not have to be separated from their pets when travelling or moving anywhere in the EU. However, smugglers are able to take advantage of such a scheme in order to smuggle animals across the border into the UK.

I am very happy to be a supporter of the Dogs Trust campaign to end puppy smuggling and will press the government on this issue and animal welfare more generally.

If any constituent is considering getting a dog, or any other animal, I would highly recommend checking local shelters first. This will give animals who have been abandoned or cannot be cared for by their original owners a second chance of having a happy, fun-filled life.

Thank for everyone who has written to me on this issue.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Burden'.

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