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The Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb
House of Lords
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15 June 2022

Dear Lady Jones,

We are writing on behalf of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) ahead of the second reading of your Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill. As you may know, the RCP has a significant interest in the effects of air pollution on health. We hope the below summary of our research in this area is helpful as you prepare for the next stage of proceedings.

In 2016, the RCP alongside the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health published '[Every breath we take](#)'. This report examined the impact of exposure to air pollution across the life course. The report found that:

- Around **40,000 premature deaths every year in the UK are attributable to exposure to outdoor air pollution.**
- The health problems resulting from exposure to air pollution have a high cost to our health services and to business. In the UK these costs add up to **more than £20bn every year.**
- People in **lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to live in environments where they are more exposed to air pollution** and therefore suffer more from the effects of exposure to high levels of air pollution.
- The public health response to air pollution should always be about protecting humans and the environment in ways that are socially inclusive and equitable, globally and across multiple generations.

The report made a number of recommendations to tackle air pollution, including:

- **Engaging local authorities to protect public health** when air pollution levels are high, such as diverting roads to reduce the volume of traffic, especially near schools.
- **Central and local government must monitor air pollution effectively** and track exposure to harmful pollutants in major urban areas and near schools.
- **Quantify the relationship between indoor air pollution and health** in order to strengthen our understanding of the relationship between indoor air pollution and health, including the key risk factors and effects of poor air quality in our homes, schools and workplaces.

After the tragic death of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, the Coroner's Prevention of Future Deaths report outlined that legally binding targets based on WHO guidelines would reduce the number of deaths from air pollution in the UK. The RCP strongly supports legally enforceable targets to reduce the amount of fine particulate matter (PM2.5).

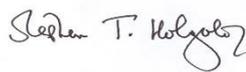
We hope that the government's current consultation on targets under the Environment Act 2021 will set ambitious targets to reduce PM2.5 to $10\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ by 2030, with the ultimate objective of reducing annual mean concentration to $5\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$ in line with the World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality guideline values published last year.

We hope that this information is useful. If you need any further information or have any questions, please do let us know.

Yours sincerely,



Sir Andrew F Goddard MD PRCP
President
Royal College of Physicians



Professor Stephen Holgate CBE, FMedSci
UKRI Clean Air Champion and Special Adviser
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