

Kemi Badenoch MP
House of Commons
London
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12 July 2022

Dear Ms Badenoch,

I am writing to follow up my letter of 11 July which drew attention to some false claims you made about the UK's net zero target during your interview with 'The Sunday Telegraph' this weekend.

I watched a recording of the launch today of your campaign for leader of the Conservative Party. I was encouraged to hear you start by saying that "it is time to tell the truth", but I was disappointed that you then went on to make more inaccurate statements about the net zero target. You stated: "And there are too many well-meaning regulations slowing growth and clogging up the arteries of the economy. Too many like net zero target set up with no thought to the effects on industries in poorer parts of the country. The consequence is simply to displace emissions to other countries. Unilateral economic disarmament."

In fact, as you may be aware, many UK businesses are being crippled by the recent surge in the wholesale prices of oil and natural gas which has significantly increased their energy costs. Meanwhile, many windfarms are producing electricity at below-market rates. If the UK had moved faster to improve energy efficiency and deploy domestic clean energy, consistent with the pledge to deliver net zero in the Conservative Party's Manifesto for the 2019 General Election, UK businesses would be in a stronger competitive position now due to lower energy costs.

You suggested that the net zero target is disadvantaging industries in poorer parts of the UK and causing them to re-locate to other countries. There simply is no evidence for this claim, which is hardly surprising because the additional costs being incurred through, for instance, carbon pricing are far lower than the other costs, such as on labour, that businesses face. And, of course, current carbon prices are far lower than the recent increases in the wholesale prices of fossil fuels. Indeed, it is the energy-intensive, trade-exposed businesses, which employ less than 1 per cent of the UK workforce, which are being hit hardest by the current dependence on expensive fossil fuels. But even if they were motivated to leave the UK, there are a diminishing number of polluters' havens left to which they could re-locate. The latest analysis by the United Nations Environment Programme shows that more than 75 countries representing most of the world's economy, including the United States, China, India and the European Union, now have net zero targets.

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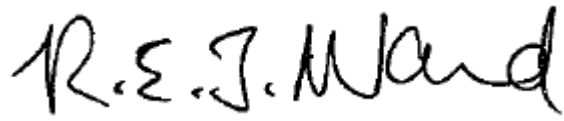
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Chair:
**Professor Lord Stern
of Brentford**

It is disappointing to see an MP who wants to be considered a serious candidate for Prime Minister make so many false claims about UK climate policy. I do hope that you will seek urgently to educate and inform yourself before making any other statements on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R.E.J. Ward". The letters are cursive and connected, with a distinct loop at the end of the word "Ward".

Bob Ward
Policy and Communications Director

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