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Edward Mountain MSP  
Convener  
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

By Email: [netzero.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:netzero.committee@parliament.scot)

30 October 2023

Dear Convener,

### **Free Bus Travel for People Seeking Asylum**

I am writing to inform the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee that the Scottish Government will today confirm that £2 million will be made available in next year's budget to fund free bus travel for asylum seekers in Scotland.

Around a third of people seeking asylum in Scotland are thought to already be eligible for the existing National Concessionary Travel Schemes through age or disability criteria. Work will continue to establish the most appropriate way to extend free bus travel to all asylum seekers, whilst mitigating potential unintended consequences for those we are seeking to support.

Scotland already provides free bus travel to a larger percentage of the population than schemes elsewhere in the UK, with more than 2 million people eligible. Every day, we hear from people whose lives are literally being transformed by this policy – from families on low incomes to children and young people who are now able to take up new opportunities.

The announcement of this proposal is the next step in making sure our transport system – and our country – is fair and accessible to all.

Decisions on all spending for 2024-25 and future years are also, of course, subject to the outcome of the Scottish Budget process and associated approval by the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Government will also continue to engage with the Scottish Parliament as policy proposals develop.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

This letter has also been copied to Kaukab Stewart MSP, Convener of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee for interest and following the Members Business Debate in Parliament on this issue that took place on 26 October.

Yours sincerely

**FIONA HYSLOP**

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