



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

Gillian Martin MSP  
Acting Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy  
Scottish Government

**10 April 2025**

Dear Acting Cabinet Secretary,

### **Petition 2123 – Update air quality standards in Scotland to align with 2021 World Health Organisation guidelines**

On 1 April, the Committee considered [Petition 2123](#), submitted by Asthma and Lung UK Scotland. The petitioner is urging the Scottish Government to amend the Air Quality Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2010 by setting new limit values for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) which align with the World Health Organization air quality guidelines published in 2021.

We note from the Scottish Government's response to the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee that the current air quality strategy is set to expire in July 2026. The Committee also understand that the planned review of the strategy will assess existing air quality standards and objectives, and that the updated guideline values from the World Health Organization will be taken into account during this process.

Given the significant impact of air quality on public health and the public interest in this topic, the Committee would appreciate a detailed update on the progress of the review to assist with determining our approach to the petition. Specifically, we would welcome information on:

#### **Review objectives and scope**

1. What are the objectives and scope of the planned review of the Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (CAFS2) strategy?

#### **Alignment with WHO Guidelines:**

2. Is an assessment of the feasibility and implications of aligning with the 2021 WHO standards an explicit part of this review, and how will that be assessed?

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Contact: Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email [netzero@parliament.scot](mailto:netzero@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

3. Will the Scottish Government consider adopting a 'continuous improvement approach', and what that might mean in the context of legal standards, as recommended by the Committee in its [report](#) on the Scottish Government's Air Quality Improvement Plan and wider air quality issues?

### **Timeline and implementation**

4. What is the timeline for undertaking this review? Please include key milestones, stakeholder engagement, and expected dates for implementation of any new measures in your response.

### **Integration with other policies**

5. How will the review of CAFS2, and specifically the consideration of WHO 2021 air quality guidelines be integrated into and aligned with the forthcoming draft Climate Change Plan?

### **EU alignment**

6. Will the review look at potential alignment with the updated EU Ambient Air Quality Directive?

Once we have received your response, the Committee will consider potential next steps, including the option of holding an evidence session with relevant stakeholders.

The Committee would appreciate a response by 8 May.

Yours sincerely,



**Edward Mountain MSP**

**Convener**

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee**