



## **FUEL DUTY**

### **What pressure can we put on government to reduce fuel duty and create an even playing field with foreign truckers?**

There was a mass lobby of parliament in early July where I was lucky enough to meet my own MP Elliott Morley the Scottish nationalist MP's Plaidcymru and 6 of the Scottish Labour MP's.

I most certainly do not envy MP's in their job. They are damned if they do and damned if they don't. They cannot be experts in every field and rely on civil servants to brief them.

I listen to many people criticise MP's but how many of the people who criticise actually take the time and effort to email, meet or lobby their MP's?

What became clear through talking to the MP's were:

- The pressure they are under to tow the party line, though of course none would openly say that.
- Lack of knowledge on the transport industry real economics.
- Even more lacking was their understanding of the effect of shipping increases on our industry.
- The information they rely on is the official civil service information.
- Lack of pressure due to lack of dialogue from ourselves.
- How powerless they are as individuals.

They clearly all work very hard. The speed of response to my queries from my MP has been superb with parliamentary questions being asked on my behalf.

However what we need now is action not words. Foreign vehicles must be taxed in the same way as our own. Alternatively, duty rates could be reduced. If foreign vehicles are tackled it will net the government more revenue. The other thing that has to happen is foreign hauliers need to be dealt with legally in the same way as UK hauliers.

The question we all need to ask our MP's now is why despite them knowing foreign hauliers are treated in a different manner to our own UK hauliers why is there not immediate action to deal with it. We want action now, not talking and not promises of something happening next year.