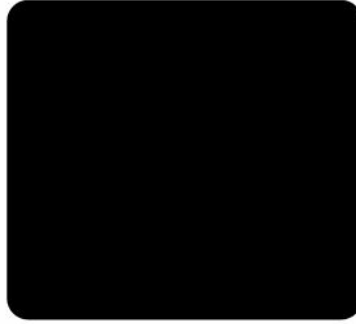


COPE 62



10<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

Dear Mr Kennedy,

I understand that MPs have a difficult job – especially with the high levels of press intrusion that they and their families suffer – which is why it is important that they have an expenses system that is fair to both them and the taxpayer.

Any reforms should offer value for money to the taxpayer, which means that the proposed new system should not cost more than the one that it is replacing otherwise there is not a lot of point going through this exercise.

My particular concerns are about making available suitable accommodation for our representatives. Once again the new system must offer value for money to the taxpayer. There is not a lot of point renting properties if the cost is going to be greater than providing mortgage support for MPs, cost must be paramount.

Of course MPs should be primarily responsible for identifying suitable properties and they must be appropriate to their needs, ie if they have family they need to be family friendly. Or if the MP/family members are disabled it needs to be accessible and easily adaptable for their needs. If the existing system of providing interest only mortgage support proves to be better value for money it should be retained and tighter rules applied with regards to flipping. If CGT is paid under the existing system on any property profits does this not represent a fair deal for the taxpayer?

Yours sincerely,

Ian Barnes

