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The Secretary
Committee on Standards in Public Life
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

RECEIVED
11 AUG 2009

5 August 2009

Dear Sir,

MPs' expenses and allowances

I have recently been in correspondence with the Speaker of the House who has advised me that I might write to you about my concerns. I have many concerns about MPs' expenses and allowances but will confine myself to commenting on two aspects. I hope that it is not too late to contribute to your inquiry.

Firstly the question of second homes. MPs should not expect to be treated any differently from thousands of people who have to live and work away from home for extended periods. MPs need accommodation while they do their work; they absolutely do not need and should not have second 'homes' with all the accoutrements of a home. The public purse should provide basic functional accommodation to a good standard but no more. If individual MPs wish to make arrangements for their families to join them away from the family home, whether in their constituencies or in London, it should be at their own expense.

Secondly the question of transparency. There must be no question of MPs having any allowances or expenses or any use of public funds for any purpose without receipts for every penny being produced and checked. I realize that this will mean that considerable time, effort and expense will have to be put into checking what should not need checking. However, we are long past the point at which we can trust MPs not to abuse any system under which they are not fully and publicly accountable. If we have to pay to force decent standards of honesty and responsibility on our MPs, so be it.

Yours faithfully

D. Morris