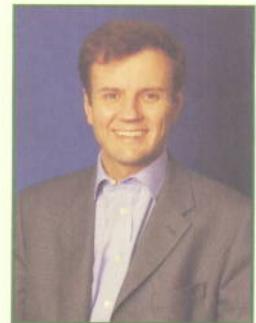




GREG HANDS MP

Member of Parliament for Hammersmith & Fulham



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Mr Philip Trippenbach
40a New King's Road
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SW6 4ST

Our ref: BIS/DEBill/Rush1P1
18 March 2010

Dear Mr Trippenbach,

Thank you for contacting me about the Digital Economy Bill.

For nearly twelve years, the Government has neglected this crucial area of our economy. We believe a huge amount needs to be done to give the UK a modern regulatory environment for the digital and creative industries. Whilst we welcome aspects of the Bill, there are other areas of great concern to us.

We want to make sure that Britain has the most favourable intellectual framework in the world for innovators, digital content creators and high tech businesses. We recognise the need to tackle digital piracy and make it possible for people to buy and sell digital intellectual property online. However, it is vital that any anti-piracy measures promote new business models rather than holding innovation back. This must not be about propping up existing business models but creating an environment that allows new ones to develop. That is why we were opposed to the original Clause 17 and are still opposed to Clause 29, which props up ITV regional news with Licence-Fee-payer's money.

The Government's failure to introduce the Bill until the eleventh hour of this Parliament has given rise to considerable concern that we no longer have the time to scrutinise many controversial measures it contains. We believe they should be debated in the House of Commons, and only if we are confident that they have been given the scrutiny that they deserve will we support them.

My colleagues in the Shadow Culture, Media and Sport and Shadow Business, Innovation and Skills teams will do everything in their power to work towards legislation that strengthens our digital sector and provides the security that our businesses and consumers need.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Hands

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