

SMART MOTORWAYS KILL PRESS RELEASE

12th November 2024

Transport Select Committee Oral Evidence



Secretary of State for Transport Louise Haigh to be questioned by the Transport Committee – Tomorrow 13th Nov

The Transport Secretary Louise Haigh is to be quizzed in the first session of new Transport Committee. The select committee oral evidence session starts 9.15am, The Grimond Room, Portcullis House, Westminster on Wednesday 13th of November.

This session is Haigh's first select committee appearance since the general election, and the Committee's first evidence session of the Parliament. She sits alongside the DfT's two Permanent Secretaries, Dame Bernadette Kelly and Jo Shanmugalingam.

The Smart Motorways Kill campaign is particularly interested in any promises the SoS will make regarding Smart Motorways and as **a result Claire Mercer from the campaign will be attending the evidence session tomorrow.**

While in opposition Haigh was very critical of smart motorways and went as far as including SMK in the circulation of a letter stating "We know that current smart motorways, coupled with inadequate safety systems, are not fit for purpose and are putting lives at risk" and "Current evidence clearly shows that means reinstating the hard shoulder on all motorways"

But once Haigh became SoS for Transport with the means to actually do something, suddenly a "review" will do. This review was very disingenuously represented as something to assess whether smart motorways were fit for purpose" and that the Office of Rail & Road would be involved in this. But just yesterday the ORR confirmed in writing for procedural reasons "that they are unable to assess whether smart motorways are fit for purpose" and that "The review, which the SoS was referring to, is our already-planned annual assessment of safety performance on the strategic road network"

Claire Mercer: "so this 'review' as it was represented, never existed and the event encompassing ALL roads which *may* touch on smart motorways, was booked years ago by the previous government.

We have wasted nearly 11 months believing Labour were going to do something about this issue and all they have done is deflected and pass off Tory work as their own.

Claire is as always, available for interviews, and will be at Westminster tomorrow from approx. 8:30am till about 2:30pm, Please contact Claire directly on info@smartmotorwayskill.co.uk, this address is constantly monitored and replies will be quick.

Smart Motorways Kills was founded following the death of Jason Mercer (44) on the 'Smart Motorway' at M1 J34 on the 7th June 2019. A minor accident escalated into the death of 2 men. From very early on into the investigation into Jason's death it was obvious that there were many serious safety issues in the design and implementation of Smart Motorways. As such Jason's widow, Claire, founded the campaign in the hopes of avoiding further unnecessary deaths.

The campaign aims to bring a Judicial Review against Highways England and the Department for Transport over the failures in safety and the manner in which the implementation has been handled.

The campaign's website is www.smartmotorwayskills.co.uk Social media at facebook.com/smartmotorwayskill and twitter.com/Motorwayskill