

## Local Transport Bill Report stage – House of Commons

The Local Transport Bill aims to improve local transport by making changes in three key areas: bus services, transport governance and road pricing. Campaign for Better Transport has three key concerns about the Bill as it stands. We believe that:

### 1) Climate change must be tackled through the Bill

Local transport authorities have a duty to have regard to the environment in the Bill, but no specific duty to reduce carbon emissions from transport.

Currently, Government has no way of ensuring that local authorities will help to achieve the carbon reduction targets agreed in the Climate Change Bill, or that they will contribute towards the climate change goals of 'Towards a Sustainable Transport System'. The Bill should enable Government to guarantee that local authorities will play their part in tackling climate change through the transport policies they adopt.

#### **Suggested amendment**

In carrying out their general duties under the Transport Act 2000 and this Act, Local Transport Authorities shall

- (i) carry out an assessment of greenhouse gas emissions from transport in their areas, and future trends for these emissions
- (ii) publish this assessment
- (iii) produce a strategy for reducing these emissions, in consultation with others including Regional Development Agencies, Regional Assemblies, the Highways Agency, relevant highway authorities and relevant railway licence holders [i.e. Network Rail]

### 2) Quality contracts need to be a realistic option for all local authorities

The current process outlined in the Bill is difficult, time-consuming and risky.

We support PTEG and local authority amendments on this. In particular, we are very concerned that the approvals process means unaccountable quangos would determine bus policy, rather than locally accountable transport authorities. We think the Transport Tribunal is unnecessary and the Approvals Board should have a ratification role only.

### 3) The new bus passenger watchdog must be effective

Currently the Government does not plan for Passenger Focus, the new bus passenger watchdog, to have an appeals role for complaints. This means bus users (outside London) will be second class citizens: unlike rail passengers, they will not be able to turn to Passenger Focus for help. The Bill should ensure that Passenger Focus has an appeals role for complaints about buses, as with rail.

Passenger Focus also needs to be able to require information and performance data from bus operators and local authorities.

Finally, the Traffic Commissioners should be given a duty to have regard to the watchdog.