Rt Hon John Swinney MSP
An Fhìor Urr John Swinney BPA
First Minister of Scotland
Am Prìomh Mhinistear

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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive of Aberdeen & Grampian
Chamber of Commerce

By email: Heather.morrell@agcc.co.uk

3 June 2026

D Russell,

Thank you for your kind congratulations.

I very much welcome your comments and want to recognise the vital importance of the North East to Scotland's economy, as well as the key role that Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce plays in representing its members' views and contributing to economic development and growth in the region.

On your specific comments on improving connectivity, including through the Campaign for North East Rail. I am aware Transport Scotland has been working with the Chamber and other stakeholders to better understand the case for investment for restoring rail services to Ellon, Peterhead and Fraserburgh. As outlined in our manifesto, we will continue to advance consideration of this proposal. I am very supportive of ongoing discussions on how we increase sustainable travel and support better integrated travel infrastructure for the future needs of the North East.

Secondly, on the energy transition and the importance of providing clarity to support investment. Our manifesto was clear that we need to see a parallel track approach to the energy transition, in which North Sea oil and gas production is managed alongside the increasing deployment of renewables. That is why we are calling on the UK Government to replace the Energy Profits Levy with a fair system that taxes excess profits, but protects jobs, energy security and investment in our energy sector. And, for as long as Scotland requires fossil fuels, we will continue to call on the UK Government to approach decisions for North Sea oil and gas projects on a rigorously evidence-led, case-by case, basis – with energy and security and climate compatibility as key considerations.

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Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

Delivering increased economic growth in Scotland is at the heart of the Scottish Government's agenda, we want to work with businesses and our partners across the economy. By supporting enterprise, promoting entrepreneurship and helping people into fair work, we aim to unlock opportunities for sustainable growth.

Engagement with the business community is a priority to better understand the environment and how we can help to ease pressures and maximise opportunities in a flexible way – particularly in this time of rapidly evolving technology. I therefore welcome the Chamber's commitment to constructive collaboration and the range of priorities highlighted in your letter. Officials are currently developing a coordinated programme of post-election business engagement across government for the coming months ahead and will be in contact in due course.

JOHN SWINNEY MSP

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