

From: The Chairman of the South East England Regional Assembly

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**COUNCILS AND
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HOUSE OF COMMONS MODERNISATION COMMITTEE: Regional Parliamentary Committees

I am writing in response to the invitation from the Modernisation Committee of the House of Commons to comment on the proposition within the Government's Sub National Review to create Regional Parliamentary Committees. I offer the following four points on this Assembly's behalf:

- 1 Regional Parliamentary Committees, in whatever form, should complement and not duplicate accountability and scrutiny arrangements within the region. Above all, they should provide the means for examining the impact of Government policies on the region. There seems to have been a fundamental assumption that Parliamentary scrutiny would look at the region and regional institutions. I am suggesting strongly that the Parliamentary telescope should turn through 180 degrees and look at the impact of central government policies and investment on each region.
- 2 Regional committees should reflect the political make-up of the region, not of the UK Parliament. Maintaining overall Parliamentary proportionality is simply not possible in some regions neither is it democratically acceptable.
- 3 Every opportunity should be taken to involve Local Authority Leaders alongside MPs, perhaps within a hybrid Committee.
- 4 Regional Committees should not simply be talking shops. To add value, they must have the capacity (within clear parameters, naturally) to set and resource their own work programme.

Chairman

cc: Paul Bevan Esq, Chief Executive, South East England Regional Assembly