Date

(MSP name)

(Address/Email address – easily found through search engine)

Dear (name),

**Business Rates for Nurseries in Scotland**

I am (name), (director) of (name of setting) in your constituency providing places for (number) children and employing (number) people.

The burden of business rates is having a very negative effect on my nursery with a knock on impact on the children and families we serve.

We are members of National Day Nurseries Association which believes passionately in choice and quality for families and reducing childcare costs for parents. NDNA has evidence of steep rises in business rates (as much as 215%) being seen throughout Scotland. My setting, (name) has seen rises of (percentage). The impact of such a rise could be increase in fees to parents, closure of businesses and a decrease in quality as nurseries are penalised for investment in premises by the prospect of an increase in their rateable value.

The 2017 NDNA Annual survey indicates the key issue for nurseries is balancing the books whilst maintaining quality and sustainability, this is made difficult by a number of financial constraints such as rising business rates, payroll costs, Scottish Living Wage, funding falling short of costs leading to increased fees and pension auto enrolment. Following a recent petition led by an NDNA volunteer, the Public Petitions Committee at Holyrood committed to exploring this issue further and agreed to contact the Government, councils, other childcare organisations and parenting groups.

We need a healthy private nursery sector with its unique ability to rise to the challenge of flexible, year round provision to meet the increase to 1140 hours early learning and childcare. The NDNA has long campaigned for nurseries to receive full exemption from Business Rates. I thoroughly support the NDNA in this and would like your backing in this too. Recognising the social good of nurseries providing early learning and childcare by government giving all childcare provision, including the private sector, 100% relief on business rates in order to keep costs down for parents and support capital investment in nurseries would further support delivery of the ambition to expand early learning and childcare.

I would be grateful for your support on this issue and would warmly welcome you to our nursery so that you can see the great work that we carry out and to discuss the issues mentioned in this letter.

Yours sincerely

(Name and nursery contact details)