

Dear Mr Miliband,

I want to begin by acknowledging the importance of GB Energy in bringing the UK closer to achieving its net zero goals and the necessity of shifting to renewable energy. I also appreciate the dedication you have shown to tackling forced labour in supply chains from the dispatch box.

However, it is vital that government-run companies uphold the highest ethical standards. I am concerned that there are insufficient measures to ensure that goods procured by GB Energy will not be tainted by forced labour. This is something that a number of your PLP colleagues have drawn attention to.

As a nationalised industry, GB Energy belongs to all of us. The public procurement of goods linked to modern slavery implicates all British people in the abhorrent practice of slavery. In addition, if GB Energy and the government take moral responsibility, it would set a powerful precedent for other companies in the UK.

The current UK legislation on modern slavery (primarily found in the Modern Slavery Act 2015) is significantly behind that of our allies in the USA, EU, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Korea. This has made the UK a “dumping ground for dirty goods”. It is estimated that 40% of solar panels used in the UK are made with materials mined by enslaved Uyghur people in China. This makes it near-impossible for many people who rely on solar electricity to avoid being complicit in forced labour and modern slavery. It is the responsibility of parliament to pass legislation that ensures British citizens do not have to tacitly support forced labour to live their daily life.

As a Jewish person, I am deeply concerned by the likelihood that GB Energy will be complicit in the global modern slavery market. Judaism imparts in many of us a duty towards social justice, and my sense of Jewishness also imbues in me a responsibility to limit the impact of climate change. While I recognise the need for more renewable forms of energy, it is essential that clean energy is coupled with clean supply chains.

Thank you again for working towards making the UK a clean energy power that we can all be proud of. Yours sincerely,

[your name]

[your postcode – if you are a constituent]

[contact details – optional]