**Diagram

Description automatically generated**

**Write to your MP and #SupportScotch**

1. Find the contact details of your MP by searching your postcode [here](https://www.writetothem.com/).

2. Your local MP is displayed, click their name

3. Copy and paste the suggested letter below – please change as necessary

4. Provide your full name and address – needed when contacting MPs

5. Send the letter to your MP via email

6. Tell us you have emailed your MP by emailing [info@swa.org.uk](mailto:info@swa.org.uk) so we keep you in touch with our campaign to end tariffs

We have drafted a suggested letter to send to your local MP below. Contacting your MP is easy and only takes a couple of minutes.

Dear <insert name of local MP>,

**Support Scotch Whisky in the UK alcohol duty review**

I am writing to ask you to support the Scotch Whisky industry and call on the Chancellor to think again over his proposals to reform UK alcohol duty.

As you will know, the Scotch Whisky industry is vital to Scotland’s economy. The industry supports 42,000 jobs and generates more than £5.5bn in economic contribution each year. In the 2019 Queen’s Speech, the UK government committed to *“ensure our tax system is supporting Scottish whisky and gin producers and protecting 42,000 jobs supported by Scotch across the UK.”* Two years after this promise was made the Chancellor announced proposals for a reformed alcohol duty system which would put Scotch Whisky and other spirits at an even greater competitive disadvantage than under the current - already unfair - system.

As my local MP, I would like you to write to the Chancellor to tell him to think again and ensure the reformed system keeps the UK government’s promise to support the Scotch Whisky industry.

Under the current system, per unit of alcohol, Scotch Whisky - and other spirits – are taxed 16% more than still wine (12% abv), 51% more than beer (4% abv) and 185% more than cider (4% abv). The Chancellor's proposals would make some elements of this system even worse. Scotch Whisky and other spirits would be taxed 11% more than still and sparkling wine (12% abv); 51% more than beer (4% abv), climbing to 59% under the ‘draught relief’; and 227% more than cider (4% abv). UK spirits duty would remain 82% higher than the average across EU member states and the highest in the G7. And the Treasury would have given tax cut to the majority of the cider market in the UK, in the on and off trade; a tax cut to beer in the on trade; a 25% tax cut per unit of alcohol to imported prosecco, cava and champagne, which makes up the vast majority of the UK sparkling wine market - but nothing to support domestic spirits producers.

The principle the Chancellor set out – “the stronger the drink, the higher the rate” – will continue to discriminate against distillers. The decision to base future taxation on alcohol strength, rather than alcohol content, is misguided and wrong. The proposals embed the mistaken belief that lower abv products are somehow better, or less harmful, than higher abv products. They ignore the fact that a 4% abv pint of beer or cider contains 2.3 units of alcohol – more than a typical spirts-based cocktail with 2 units – and proceeds to tax alcohol served in this way less. The proposals penalise the vast majority of people who consume alcohol responsibly when they choose to enjoy a spirits-based drink over other alcohol.

The current health guidelines on low-risk drinking urge people not to consume more than 14 unit of alcohol per week. Alcohol is alcohol – the Chief Medical Officers’ guidelines recognise this, but the proposals ignore it and would continue to discriminate between categories. A more rationale system would base tax on units of alcohol, meaning tax would remain consistent across categories and more closely align with the CMO guidelines.

The industry needs your support before the consultation ends on 30 January 2022.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[first name, second name]

[full postal address]