[Your address]

[Name of local MP]

[Address of local MP]

[Date]

Dear [Insert name of your local MP],

It has come to my attention that despite existing legislation (The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, which transposes Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 from the EU) expressly forbidding the handling of chickens by their legs on farms and during loading and unloading, these illegal and inhumane practices persist. The poor enforcement of these laws has resulted in widespread animal suffering, with approximately 1 billion chickens affected each year.

The practice of handling chickens by their legs results in:

* Broken bones, dislocations, bruising and severe pain.
* The inability to breath as chickens lack a diaphragm to keep their organs away from their lungs
* Prolonged and intense stress.

This cruel practice is evidenced in the recent investigation by Animal Justice Project, with catchers seemingly grabbing as many as 5 distressed chickens in each hand. This is all in the name of minimal savings. Data from the Dutch animal protection organisation Eyes on Animals shows that the cost for eggs only increases by € 0.0004 per egg when using the upright handling method.

The government’s codes of practice for chickens bred for meat and eggs are inconsistent with the law and permit the handling of chickens by their legs. DEFRA must update these codes to explicitly disallow handling by their legs and outline upright handling practices.

In addition, The Animal Welfare Committee has published a report recognising the negative impact handling chickens by the legs has on their welfare. Yet, in the same report, the AWC proposes a change in the current law to accommodate the common practice. This is a dilution of welfare standards post Brexit, something the UK government claimed it would not do.

Your support to ensure the codes of practice are updated and welfare standards are not diluted post Brexit is invaluable. I urge you to show your commitment to both of these important actions.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to animal welfare.

Sincerely,

[Your name]