Dear **[INSERT NAME OF MP]**

**Im a TFL Tenant and I urgently need your help.**

My name s is **[INSERT NAME]** and I run a small business within your constituency at **[INSERT ADDRESS]**

**[INSERT YOUR STORY]**

***Here is an Example Testimony of a TFL Arches Tenant please amend as appropriate!***

 I have been a tenant of TfL since ***[INSERT],*** and I have a small family business located in ***[INSERT]*** called ***[INSERT NAME].*** I have run a successful business and have always been good tenant however since the first lockdowns, our business turnover has dropped by ***[INSERT]***% and I have had to resort to reducing staff by ***[INSERT].***

Prior to covid my turnover was ***[INSERT]*** and I employed ***[INSERT]*** staff including being very involved in my community and have a strong ethic of giving back to the neighbourhood by employing local people with a focus on those more vulnerable within our society.

To date TfL have offered me some rental discounts although what I need most is certainty. I know the footfall in stations has been absolutely decimated, on some days, my trading is so low, it costs me more in overheads and salaries just to open! This cycle of uncertainty simply can’t continue. The impact on my mental health has been ***[INSERT AS APPROPRIATE].***

TfL Arches Management Team have been very supportive since Covid struck, they have listened to my needs and I feel strongly they are doing all they can to help me survive this pandemic however, due to their own lack of funding and resources they are stretched to breaking point, they need to recruit more surveyors and they need to urgently invest in their empty spaces to bring them back into use or we will see false and inflated demand for space which will push rents up even more!

I am a member of Guardians of the Arches and I am in close dialog with TFL Senior Property Management however they simply can’t do more to help us if the Government withdraw their funding so soon. There absolutely must be a proper framework in place for TfL to ensure a sustainable recovery. Plan B is only going to exasperate the current crisis and more businesses, their families, employees and supply chain will fold. We will recover from this crisis but the battle is not won....all the work already done, all the furlough costs paid, all the grants given will be wasted if the Government withdraw their support too soon.

This is public money, a public service and I’m a passionate citizen and constituent of London and I feel deeply distressed that politics rather than humanity is driving decisions that will ultimately cost the public purse even more – the families and employees reliant on the revenue of the 2500 small businesses within TfL estate are being failed and will become another burden on state aid and social care unless urgent action is taken now.

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Transport for London is the landlord for approximately 3000 commercial units in London, 2500 are occupied and 93% of these are rented by small and micro businesses like myself.

These are made up of 1800 arches & high street units and 860 units inside our stations.

The way TFL is structured unfortunately means that those tenants located in the railway arches or high street locations are under a different management team to those who rent units within the London Underground stations. Due to this, we have seen significant and alarming disparity in response to the covid pandemic and ongoing customer support. Guardians of the Arches has been in close negotiations with TfL & London Underground to remedy this however the lack of funding, capacity and resource within TfL is creating major barriers to fixing this mess.

Tenants in the railway arches and high street estate have broadly been supported to a far greater degree than the most vulnerable and more significantly impacted businesses in London Underground stations. These tenants have only begun to receive communications from their landlord a few months ago due to tenants raising the alarm via our tenants association.

The economic impact of the pandemic is yet to be truly understood however the mental health impact of uncertainty, confusion and delay is preventable and easily remedied by clear and honest communication.

Our community of tenants are deeply passionate about the survival of their transport network, we feel a personal and emotional connection with TfL . As experienced and successful business leaders, we can see with absolute clarity that if the government doesnt take urgent steps to support TfL immediately, with assurance that funding will be used to directly support the small businesses within their estate, our families and the thousands of people they employ across the capital.

I would like to also point out, that all of London can see the impending devastation on the horizon :

**Commenting on the short extension of TfL funding, John Dickie, Chief Executive of London First, said:**

“Extending TfL’s funding until December 17 only makes sense if that time is used to create a proper framework that enables it to keep running the network throughout the capital’s recovery. This means keeping a tiny sliver of the taxes Londoners pay to help fund our economically essential transport network. It also means giving the Mayor the tools he needs to find new ways of funding the system.

“The return of work from home guidance means that TfL is likely to see fewer passengers and lower revenues in the weeks ahead. At the same time those who have to go to their workplace will be as reliant as ever on the network and its safe operation. It is vital that both London and National Government work together to build public confidence and secure the capital’s future.”

**As our elected representative, please can you help me and appeal to the government to step in and help protect us.**