Thank you for your letter of 24 October to the Secretary of State setting out the concerns of a number of organisations regarding the UK leaving the EU chemicals regime established under the REACH regulation. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

We recognise the need to provide certainty for all stakeholders and we are working closely with colleagues across government to make sure that we continue to listen to their views. With respect to chemicals, our priority is to maintain an effective regulatory system for the management and control of chemicals to safeguard human health and the environment, respond to emerging risks and allow trade with the EU that is as frictionless as possible. However, you make some assertion which are unfounded.

It is our intention to pursue a deep and special partnership with the EU. The Prime Minister has stated that the chemicals sector is one where we are aiming for a positive deal in terms of our future trade agreement with the EU. As part of the exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the EU and the 27 Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of chemicals regulation in the best interests of both the UK and the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Bill will convert current EU law into domestic law and use the powers to amend REACH, as well as other related chemicals regulation to make them work properly in the UK, giving consumers and businesses as much certainty as possible. This will mean that the standards established by REACH will continue to apply in the UK.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr Thérèse Coffey MP