



Craig Whittaker MP

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Response to Heineken Takeover of Punch Taverns – January 2017

Thank you for contacting me about the proposed takeover of Punch Taverns PLC by Heineken.

While I appreciate the concerns that have been expressed over the potential move, this does remain a commercial matter. That said, it is clearly a huge vote of confidence in the British pub, and I understand that an offer currently rests with Punch shareholders for agreement in the coming weeks. This will, of course, be subject to regulatory approval and receive appropriate scrutiny from the competition authorities.

More broadly, I am a firm supporter of pubs here in the constituency and know they play an important role in communities across the UK. I am proud of the action taken to back pubs, including three cuts in beer duty, and have no doubt of the Government's support for the British pub.

As you may be aware, the Pubs Code came into force last July, giving tenants more rights and greater protection when dealing with large pub companies that own tied pubs. An independent adjudicator has also been set up to help ensure tied tenants are treated fairly by pub companies and are no worse off than free-of-tie publicans, a principle I support firmly.

Ultimately, the UK has benefited greatly from being an open and free economy. British companies have been successful in attracting investment into the UK and generating the wealth that the nation needs to prosper.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP