

MEP Alyn wants to help thirsty travellers!

✘ MEP IN MOVE TO ADDRESS FLYING THIRST

SNP MEP Alyn Smith is calling for a change in European law to ensure that all EU airports provide safe and free drinking water to passengers.

Continuing security restrictions mean passengers can't carry liquids through security and have limited options for keeping themselves hydrated airside.

Research conducted by Smith's office has revealed that even in Scotland there is only patchy availability of water fountains and often passengers are left with no alternative but to purchase the over-priced bottled water from the airport shops or expensive food outlets.

Although in Scotland, thanks to the licensing laws, passengers can get tap water from bars in airports; this is not a workable solution for all, especially parents with young children.

In an attempt to rectify this situation, Smith has written to the European Commissioner for Transport, Siim Kallas, and the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, Tonio Borg, urging them to introduce a law forcing all European airports to provide facilities for good quality drinking water.

Alyn said:-“EU rules, which I support, have meant that passengers can no longer bring water through security, so it strikes me as only fair that the EU should give people rights to alternative sources of drinking water at airports other than having to use pricey shops.

“Many airlines and airports advise passengers to drink plenty of water throughout their journey but it’s difficult to follow that advice with no regulation for compulsory drinking water in place.

“The price of bottled water at airports is disproportionately high and while licensed premises in Scotland must provide free water, this is not a solution for everyone. Parents may understandably be reluctant to take their children into bars and this legislation covers only Scotland.

“Some Scottish airports are providing a great example for others to follow but it shouldn’t matter where you’re flying from. Standards should be the same across the board and a supply of drinking water shouldn’t be too much to ask in a 21st century European airport.

“Not only does this make sense for the health of passengers, there is also an important environmental aspect; we all know the problems associated with plastic waste including water bottles. Water fountains offer an environmentally-friendly way to help reduce plastic waste.

“This is a good, straightforward way to address a couple of problems at once and it’s certainly a sensible move for the health of passengers. I’m pressing for a small, common-sense change.”

Edinburgh Airport already offers water from a drinking fountain just after security.