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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

13 November 1989

*NBPM
AMS*

See this

**GENETICALLY MANIPULATED ORGANISMS:
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BILL**

WILL REQUEST IF AGREED

Thank you for your letter of ~~10~~ October in which you seek H Committee's policy approval for including provisions in the Environmental Protection Bill on the release of Genetically Manipulated Organisms. You wrote again on 1 November setting out revised proposals which took account of colleagues' comments and the further discussions which were held between Departments at official level.

Nicholas Ridley, David Waddington, Norman Fowler and John Gummer wrote supporting the revised proposals subject to certain detailed matters being resolved at official level. These include the administrative arrangements for enforcement of the new regulatory regime, and the detailed provisions for criminal offences. John Belstead and Malcolm Rifkind were also content with your proposals. Malcolm has said that he would wish any legislation on this issue to apply also in Scotland. No other colleague has commented and you may take it therefore that, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the detailed matters referred to above, you have H Committee's policy approval for your proposal.

We are meeting on 15 November to discuss the composition and timing of the Environmental Protection Bill. While I would not wish to hold up your Instructions to Counsel on this issue, you will appreciate that the position of these provisions in the Bill remains subject to the outcome of that discussion.

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I am copying this letter to other members of H Committee, ^{HISC 141} to Tom King and John Gummer, and to Sir Robin Butler and First Parliamentary Counsel.

GEOFFREY HOWE

The Rt Hon Christopher Patten MP