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Dear Mr Baker,

*Scientific Publications: Free for all*

I should like to draw your attention to a matter which will concern many of your constituents, that of the recent government response to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee's report *Scientific Publications Free for all?*. I am a constituent of yours and a librarian with a strong interest in how my profession can assist biomedical researchers to make their work available for the benefit of all.

The Committee's report suggested a series of measures to improve access to research publications. The government's response, which comes bizarrely from the Department of Trade and Industry, fails to take up these suggestions in any meaningful way, and bears the fingerprints of lobbyists in the pay of the big publishers.

In particular their failure to give national support to the development of institutional repositories for research papers, their conservative attitude to new models for scientific publication and the Panglossian optimism of their view of the current situation ("the government is not aware.....that there are major problems in accessing scientific information" they say) make me, and many others, extremely concerned that an important chance has been thrown away

I should be very happy to expand on these points if you would find it helpful. I believe that the Science and Technology Committee Chairman, Ian Gibson, is determined not to let the matter rest and would be very grateful if you could support him in his efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Roper  
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