[your address/email address]

[Date]

Dear [insert MP name],

My name is [insert your name] and I’m a constituent of [insert your constituency]. I am writing to you today about the legal protection of one of our most iconic native species; the hedgehog. I urge you to add your name to the Rt Hon Chris Grayling’s proposed amendment to the Environment Bill which recommends granting schedule 5 legal protection to hedgehogs under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

In the last 20 years hedgehog numbers in the UK have plummeted by 50% in rural areas and 30% in urban areas, as detailed in the 2018 *State of Britain’s Hedgehogs* report, compiled by People’s Trust for Endangered Species and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. This report also outlined that these alarming declines are a result of various factors with one common thread: human impact. Habitat loss and fragmentation, as well as roadkill and agricultural intensification, are directly contributing to the catastrophic declines of this well-loved and ecologically important species. In the current biodiversity crisis, we must do all we can to protect our native UK species.

Schedule 5 protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 would introduce a legal imperative for developers to survey for hedgehogs on new development sites, and to mitigate for them. This is vital in order to address habitat loss and fragmentation, two of the primary causes of hedgehog decline in the UK. The current schedule 6 protection of hedgehogs does not address these issues, as this status only protects the animal itself and not their nesting sites. The steep decline in their numbers shows this protection has not been adequate.

It is increasingly apparent that hedgehogs use urban and suburban areas extensively through their lifecycle. Requiring developers to survey and mitigate for hedgehogs will ensure that urban expansion will not be to the further detriment of local hedgehog populations. There is an ongoing petition for this increased legal protection, should you wish to sign and share as an additional action: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/550379>.

[optional sentences/paragraph about why you think this is important and why you love hedgehogs]

Please help safeguard hedgehogs by adding your name to this amendment.

Yours sincerely,

[add your name and post code]