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Dear Ms Burns,

### The Proposed Welsh Language (Wales) Measure

Thank you for your letter of 17 May which asks the Board about certain financial aspects of the proposed Measure.

Broadly speaking, we are not of the view that the Regulatory Impact Assessment assesses the financial implications of the proposed Measure in a realistic way, principally for two reasons:

- Firstly, as the Finance Committee seems to have acknowledged already, how can one sensibly assess the Measure's financial implications when no details have been given on the proposed regime, in particular, on the nature of the new standards and on the work that will be involved in introducing and implementing them, and on the associated timetable?
- Secondly, the Government has not presented any compelling arguments to seek to prove that the new system will be simpler and easier to operate; clearer, more effective and consistent; and more reasonable.

In our evidence to the Legislation Committee, we asked specifically:

*'Would the administrative burden be less during the **transitional period** and under the new system? Two processes would operate concurrently for a period of time, involving the establishment of the new system and the continuation of Language Schemes' operation. What would be the cost of all this, and would that cost be reasonable?'*



BWRDD YR IAITH  
GYMRAEG WELSH  
LANGUAGE BOARD

The questions raised above have still not been answered in any detail by the Government. Our opinion therefore is that it would not be possible or practicable to finance the process of establishing the regime set out in the proposed Measure within a total budget of £13.8 million, without significantly reducing work on promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language.

In the transitional period, even though there would be less work on approving Welsh Language Schemes, considerably more work would have to be undertaken on monitoring their implementation, in order to ensure that public bodies would not be tempted to rest on their laurels as they perceived the old system coming to an end, with the consequence that more restricted services of a poorer quality might be offered to consumers. We see this as a real potential danger. In addition, further executive resources, including detailed legal advice, would be needed to introduce the new system and to ensure that it leads to better services for Welsh speakers. But before one can form a judgement on whether all this would be practically possible, and on the estimated costs, much more detailed information is needed on what the introduction and implementation of the new regime will mean in practice.

Yours sincerely,

**Meri Huws**  
**Chair**