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Welsh Government

Jenny Rathbone MS
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee
Equality and Social Justice Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
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8 July 2022

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 June 2022, regarding the UK Government's proposal to replace the Human Rights Act 1998 with a Bill of Rights. We have also noted the response sent to the Deputy Prime Minister from the Equality and Social Justice Committee, dated 22 March 2022. We fully share your disappointment that the consultation which preceded the introduction of this Bill contained little reference to devolution, particularly relating to Wales. This point has been highlighted in our own communications with the Lord Chancellor.

The Welsh Government did request further information in relation to the proposed content of the Bill; however, we were not provided with any advance sight except for five clauses which were largely meaningless without sight of the rest of the Bill.

As you know, the Bill of Rights was introduced in the House of Commons on 22 June. We issued a fresh Written Statement the same day: [Written Statement: UK Government Bill of Rights \(22 June 2022\) | GOV.WALES](#)

Now we have sight of the Bill, we will study the contents very carefully. This will enable us to consider how far our concerns have been considered, particularly in relation to devolution, and then assess the potential impact of these UK Government

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

proposals on our own ambitions with regard to strengthening and advancing equality and human rights in Wales.

Despite our concerns about the impact of these UK Government proposals, we have accepted an invitation from the Lord Chancellor to continue in discussions as the Bill of Rights progresses through Parliament.

The Welsh Government has been and remains very clear: the proposed Bill of Rights is both unwelcome and unnecessary. It is our view that the interests of the people of Wales are best protected by retaining the Human Rights Act 1998 in its current form. We will consider all appropriate action to ensure any proposals do not detrimentally affect Wales' progress in the field of equality and human rights. Most immediately, we will need to review the content of the Bill of Rights to inform our thinking on the most appropriate way forward.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Hutt AS/MS

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