



Lesley Griffiths, MS
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

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1 February 2023

Dear Minister,

Agriculture (Wales) Bill

Thank you for your letter, dated 22 December 2022, regarding my office's response to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee's consultation on the Bill above. I am contacting you following the publication of the Committee's Stage 1 Report on the Bill at the end of January.

I am glad that the Committee has quoted our evidence, including the three main issues which we asked you to address in Stage 2, in our letter dated 7 December 2022. On the basis of our evidence, the Committee makes a specific recommendation to bring forward amendments in relation to the Welsh language:

“The Minister should bring forward amendments to the Bill to strengthen its provisions for sustaining and promoting the Welsh language: this may include by adding it to the list of purposes in section 8, and committing to include specific indicators and targets in order to better measure outcomes.”
(Recommendation 11)

The report refers to the decrease in the number of Welsh speakers across Wales, shown by the 2021 Census results. Between 2011 and 2021 there was a decrease of around 23,700 in the number of Welsh speakers¹ including a decrease in rural areas such as

¹ [Chief Statistician's update: understanding Census 2021 data about the Welsh language | Digital and Data Blog \(gov.wales\)](#)

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Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. This highlights the need for the Welsh Government to act across all its policy areas to support the achievement of its strategy, *Cymraeg 2050*.

I ask you kindly, therefore, to continue to consider my office's response to the consultation on this Bill and to include amendments in Stage 2 of the Bill which reflect our recommendations and recommendation 11 in the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee's report. My officers would be glad to discuss this matter further with your officials.

Yours sincerely,

Efa Gruffudd Jones
Welsh Language Commissioner

Copy to: Paul Davies MS, Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee;
Bethan Webb, Deputy Director of the Welsh Language Division