



Elin Jones MS
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11 April 2023

Dear Elin

The UK Government introduced the Victims and Prisoners Bill to the House of Commons on 29 March 2023.

The Bill makes provision about victims of criminal conduct and others affected by criminal conduct; about the appointment and functions of individuals to act as independent public advocates for victims of major incidents; about reforms to the parole system; about the membership and functions of the Parole Board; to prohibit certain prisoners from forming a marriage or civil partnership; and for connected purposes.

My officials have been engaging with officials in the Ministry of Justice on the clauses expected to be introduced as part of the Bill. However, officials had not had sight of the final version of the Bill, late changes to the Bill or Explanatory Notes prior to it being introduced, or that the Bill title and provisions had been changed to 'Victims and Prisoners Bill'. A number of additional provisions have also been included within the Bill since a draft copy was initially published.

The Bill comprises of 4 parts and is 64 pages long. From our initial analysis, it appears the Bill touches upon areas of devolved competence. However, due to very limited prior consultation by the UK Government it has not yet been possible to fully consider the devolution consequences of what is being proposed.

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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.

I intend to lay a Legislative Consent Memorandum and any other relevant statements before the Senedd as soon as we have a clear picture of the devolution consequences of the proposed legislation, however, it is clear this will be outside the normal two week Standing Order 29 deadline. The Bill is not expected to move through Parliament at pace with second reading at the House of Commons yet to be announced.

I am copying this letter to the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, Mick Antoniw MS, the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths MS and the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, Huw Irranca-Davies MS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke above the first letter of "Jane".

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice