

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a'r Prif Chwip
Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Elin Jones MS
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22 December 2023

Dear Elin,

The UK Government introduced the Victims and Prisoners Bill to the House of Commons on 29 March 2023. The Bill completed its passage through the House of Commons on 4 December 2023 and will enter House of Lords Committee Stage on 24 January 2024.

On introduction the Bill included a wide range of measures, including placing the Victims' Code on a statutory footing, issuing guidance in relation to Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, as well as introducing the role of Independent Public Advocates. These measures were considered to be within competence of the Senedd and I laid a Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) on 19 May 2023 setting out the Welsh Government's position on these provisions.

My officials have been engaging with officials in the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice throughout the passage of the Bill and monitoring amendments. During the House of Commons Report Stage 151 government and non-government amendments were tabled and accepted. Officials only had sight of the amendments to the Bill once they had been tabled. Whilst my officials have continued to consider if these amendments fall within competence of the Senedd or substantially change the advice set out in the LCM laid on 19 May, it has not been possible to analyse these and lay a supplementary LCM within the two-week window set out in Standing Orders.

It is expected that further amendments will be made to the Bill during the House of Lords Committee Stage, including potential Government amendments to modify or overturn the previously accepted non-Government amendment related to the Infected Blood Inquiry. We are also continuing to liaise with UK Government on the issues previously subject to legislative consent memoranda outlined above, and expect further amendments on some of those issues during Committee Stage.

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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 therefore expect to lay a further supplementary LCM on the Bill following Committee Stage in the Lords, setting out the latest situation on relevant amendments ahead of the expected legislative consent motion debate. Given the timescales, that supplementary LCM will also cover any relevant amendments made at Commons Report Stage. Our current expectation is for the consent motion debate to take place in late February.

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.

Yours sincerely,

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

Jane Hutt AS/MS
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