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Dyddiad | Date: 09.12.2024

Pwnc | Subject: Advancing Human Rights in Wales

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Senedd Cross Party Group on Human Rights. A meeting of the Cross Party Group on 6th December discussed your letter dated 8th November 2024 to the chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee (Ref JH/PO/320/24)). As you are aware, the letter sets out the Welsh Government's response to the Committee's request for information concerning progress on strengthening and advancing equality and human rights in Wales.

At its meeting of 6th December the Cross Party Group requested that I write to you in the following terms.

To express concern that the information provided in your letter raises doubts about the Welsh Government's commitment to protect and promote human rights in Wales through progress on recommendations 1 and 25 of the SAEHR research.

In contrast to the position suggested in your letter that the threat to human rights has 'lessened', those in attendance at the meeting on 6th December were clear that there remain a number current, persistent and chronic threats to human rights in Wales. Examples discussed included: high levels of socioeconomic inequality and poverty in Wales, and the rise of far-right populism. With these, and other risks to human rights in mind, the Group wishes to express its unease at the lack of urgency to progress expeditiously toward incorporation of international human rights.

During the meeting on 6th December it was also agreed that the lack of urgency on incorporation overlooks its importance to protect the human rights of future generations. Even if it were the case -

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which it is not - that the threat to human rights in the UK is less significant now than it was under the previous UK Government, it still needs to be recognised the incorporation of human rights is about putting in place enduring protections for the human rights of future generations.

Bearing the above in mind, and on behalf of the Cross Party Group on Human Rights, I would urge the Welsh Government to allocate sufficient resources to enable the Legislative Options Working Group to bring forward its recommendations on legislation to incorporate CEDAW and the UNCRPD as soon as practically possible.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Equalities and Social Justice Committee.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully,

S.A. Williams

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