

Health and Social Care Committee
Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill
HT(Ind)94 – Rhoslyn Thomas

To the clerk of the HSC Committee,

Mark Drakeford said, on the 10th December 2012, that the HSCC would be looking at the principles of the Human Transplantation Bill.

Before doing this, I believe it is vital to acknowledge that the consultations carried out by the Welsh government, who are proposing the bill, were very poorly executed. Not only that, but when addressing the responses to the consultations, the Welsh government seemed either to ignore all opposition the bill or to acknowledge and then disregard it. Lesley Griffiths said of the White Paper consultation in January 2012,

“91% of the responses we received did indicate an overall view, with 52% (646) of respondents supporting the proposals and 39% (478) opposed”

Of the 646 letters in support of the bill, 485 were standard letters and 52 were identical e-mails. In contrast, of the 478 letters in opposition, 478 (that is, every single response in opposition) were individual responses. Yet, both the standard and individual responses were given equal weight by the Health minister. However, when the opposition decided to use standard letters, given that individual letters had been, unjustly, counted as equal to standard letters, Lesley Griffiths now decided that she preferred “carefully considered responses” as opposed to standard letters.

On the 19th of October, 2012, Lesley Griffiths said,

“We received an excellent response to the consultation, with 2,891 replies received before the deadline. The vast majority of the responses [2,601] were in the form of a standard letter which raised a number of specific issues. A smaller number of responses gave detailed and considered comments to the questions. We are grateful to all respondents for their contributions”

Double standards are not befitting of someone who is supposed to represent *all* Welsh citizens, both those who are for and against this bill.

If one considers the principles of presumed consent, it seems quite obvious that it is immoral and nonsensical to assume that someone has consented to giving a part of their body if they have not expressly said “no”. In our society, consent is everything, especially regarding our bodies. Nowadays, rape is a subject of much concern. If a woman has not expressly said “no” to a man, does that mean she has said “yes”? Of course it doesn’t. In the same way, the Welsh government cannot assume that because a Welsh citizen may not have expressly said that they are against the removal of their organs, that their organs may be taken.

The Welsh government is at risk of turning Welsh citizens against Organ Donation in any form if they continue with this totalitarian piece of legislation.

Yours Sincerely
Rhoslyn Thomas