



Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS
Llywydd of the Senedd

Sent via email.

16 October 2024

Dear Elin,

I am writing to you regarding the Absent Voting (Elections in Scotland and Wales) Bill that I have introduced to the House of Commons today as a Private Members Bill.

The Bill I have introduced to the House today will make provisions in the following two key areas:

- Give the Scottish and Welsh Governments concurrent powers to bring forward regulations to align with the Elections Act and enable applications for postal and proxy votes for devolved elections to be made online.
- Provide powers to include an identity check requirement (via National Insurance number) on absent voting applications. This is an upfront check at the point of postal or proxy vote application, to minimise the risk of fraud. This requirement has been in place for registration applications since 2014.

I believe this will make welcome progress in making it easier for an elector to register for either a postal or proxy vote. If my Private Members Bill is successful, these provisions would be available for Scottish and Welsh Ministers to use ahead of the devolved elections in 2026.

I am keen to work with all stakeholders on these proposals and would be more than happy to meet with you to discuss them in more detail. I would be grateful if you could share this letter with the relevant Parliamentary Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Tracy Gilbert