

Rt Hon. Alun Cairns MP
Secretary of State for Wales
Wales Office,
Gwydyr House,
Whitehall,
London,
SW1A 2NP

18 August 2016

Dear Alun

Wales Bill

As you know, we have been working to come to an arrangement to take evidence from you on the Wales Bill.

We were heartened by your response during the debate on the Queen's Speech in Plenary in July about our invitation. We would like to now find a resolution which is mutually satisfactory, in the interest of improving this important legislation.

My committee has been following with keen interest the scrutiny of the Bill in the House of Commons. In doing this, we have been monitoring whether the issues raised with us by stakeholders have been adequately considered. We believe there are still a number of key issues that would benefit from being explored directly with you.

The nature of the Westminster scrutiny process means that crucial stakeholders in Wales have not had the opportunity to input directly and publicly during parliamentary consideration of the Bill. However, they have been able to do this as part of our detailed scrutiny of the Bill, and we would like to ensure their voice is heard as the final version of the Bill takes shape. We know that stakeholders



played a vital role in refining the draft Bill, and it is clear that some of the improvements in the current Bill are a direct result of their input. We believe that by talking to us in public, it would help improve the Bill further.

While we welcome your offer to speak to the Committee in private, we believe that for such a significant piece of constitutional legislation, which we all hope will be a durable and lasting settlement, it is important that our discussions are held in public. As well as ensuring the scrutiny process is transparent, it would deliver on commitments given by the former Secretary of State for Wales to work together to get the Bill right.

We are hoping to publish our findings in early October, and would like to have taken evidence from you before this. As we have previously stated, we can be flexible to accommodate your diary, and if necessary, we can take evidence via video-conference.

I do hope that we will be able to welcome you to the Committee in September.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies

Huw Irranca-Davies AM
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

