



Elin Jones AC, Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Elin Jones AM, Presiding Officer

National Assembly for Wales

The Rt Hon David Davis MP
Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union
Department for Exiting the European Union
9 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AS

Your ref:

Our ref: EJ/RT

24 October 2017

Dear Secretary of State

EU (Withdrawal) Bill

The EU Withdrawal Bill will have a significant impact on Wales' devolution settlement. I am pleased that you have acknowledged this and the need to seek the consent of the National Assembly for Wales for the Bill.

As well as discussing aspects of the Bill with the Welsh Government, I would like to stress the need for UK Government to engage directly with the National Assembly. Given the Assembly's role in scrutinising the implications of the Bill before considering whether to pass a legislative consent motion, it is in the UK Government's interests to foster open and positive engagement with the Assembly's committees, in particular.

I was pleased that your Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State was able to attend the recent meeting of the UK Interparliamentary Forum on Brexit. You will have noted the statement from that forum that:

"...it is essential that DExEU Ministers are available to give evidence to all parliamentary committees with a role in scrutinising the Brexit process and the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill."

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

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1NA

Llywydd@cynulliad.cymru

www.cynulliad.cymru

0300 200 7403

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1NA

Llywydd@assembly.wales

www.assembly.wales

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At the recent Joint Ministerial Committee (European Negotiations) you agreed a commitment that common policy frameworks “will respect the devolution settlements and the democratic accountability of the devolved legislatures.” The recognition given to the role of devolved parliaments is a step in the right direction.

Accordingly, I expect full engagement with the Assembly’s committees from all relevant UK Government departments, which should respect and respond to representations made to them in areas within the Assembly’s competence.

You will have seen the National Assembly’s cross-party External Affairs Committee Report published in June 2017 into The Great Repeal Bill White Paper: Implications for Wales.

You will also be aware that the same Committee, building on this report, has published a series of proposed amendments to the Bill. These are based on written and oral evidence received from a wide range of stakeholders and have benefitted from the input of constitutional and legal experts from across the United Kingdom.

Given the cross party nature of the Committee’s deliberations and the unanimous support for its recommendations, I have no hesitation in adding my support to the Committee’s proposals.

I hope that by the time the Bill proceeds to the Lords, the Government will have taken the opportunity to address the important points relating to the devolution settlement that have been raised by the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Elin Jones AM
Llywydd

cc Alun Cairns MP, Secretary of State for Wales
Damian Green MP, First Secretary of State
Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales
David Rees AM, Chair, External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee
Huw Irranca-Davies AM, Chair, Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee