

P-05-796 Calling on the Welsh Government to Ban The Use of Wild Animals in Circuses in Wales – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 17.09.18

To the Members of the Petition' s Committee of the Welsh Assembly.

My petition calling on the Welsh Government to ban the use of wild animals in circuses in Wales.

Firstly may I thank you for having my petition as an agenda item this morning. I am sure you are all aware of the statement the First Minister Carwyn Jones AM made on the 17th July 2018 in the context of announcing what legislation the Welsh Government was intending to bring forward.

"Finally Llywydd, we will bring forward a Bill to ban the use of wild animals in traveling circuses.

Animal welfare is a priority for this government and the way we treat animals is an important reflection of the values of our society. Circuses are legitimate businesses and it is not our intention to outlaw all forms of circus entertainment in Wales.

But the use of wild animals in circuses in this context is outraged and ethically unacceptable. We will prohibit their use in traveling circuses in Wales."

I greatly welcome this statement, in fact I think it's fair to say I was utterly delighted by our First Minister's words! I know many "ordinary" people who worked alongside me with my campaign where too. Including Lynne Hughes-Williams, Kirsty John and Jayne Dendle.

My Assembly Member Sian Gwenllian , MP Hywel Williams, together with their team here in Arfon also welcomed this statement.

When Lesley Griffiths AM Cabinet Secretary for Environment Planning and Rural Affairs responded to the debate in March that my petition triggered. It wasn't clear how the Welsh Government would bring legislation forward. As this is quite a complex matter (as can be seen by the routes other countries have taken) I would therefore like to know:

1. How exactly the Welsh Government intend to bring this legalisation forward. Will it be via the Animal Welfare Act of 2007 or by primary legislation ? I favour the second option.

2. A firm timescale for when legislation will be introduced in Cymru.

I have emailed the Cabinet Secretary's office many times, asking if she will discuss this issue with me, as has my AM Sian Gwenllian. Sadly without any success. I feel that my extensive knowledge on this subject will aid the Welsh Government in bringing forward the most appropriate robust legislation forward.

The whole system as I understand it is to ensure the small voices of the ordinary people of Wales are heard in relation to issues that concern them. I always sought to ensure those who had no voices of their own (the wild animals) were listened to. This hasn't always been easy especially in the light of this being a very high profile subject. However the fact that a gray haired ordinary lady from Gwynedd with few resources achieved what she did. Is great testament to your system, and those who listened and supported her along the way.

In conclusions may I just place on record my heartfelt thanks to the Chair of the committee David J Rowlands AM, together with all it's members. For all the support they have given me and the careful and diligent manner in which they have dealt with my petition. This extends to the team of Clark's who work with you. Diolch o galon.

Linda Joyce-Jones Caernarfon.

17/9/18 .