Consultation on the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

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<th>Evidence submitted to the Children, Young People and Education Committee for Stage 1 scrutiny of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill</th>
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About you
Individual

1. The Bill’s general principles

1.1 Do you support the principles of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill?

— No

1.2 Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

Along with thousands of others, forming the majority of people in Wales, I believe that the existing legislation provides sufficient protection of children from physical abuse. As an experienced loving parent I have found that careful use of smacking provides and appropriate and effective means of nurturing discipline, especially when linked with rational explanation. I was so disciplined as a child myself and realised its purpose and effectiveness. Removal of the right to exercise such discipline will contribute to the current disastrous growth in self-indulgence, will add to the load on the already overburdened police. courts and social services sectors, and criminalise responsible parents.

For some time the police service has been majorly distracted from its core function of dealing with serious violence and theft and needs a reduction in the petty politically-correct distractions. Also, local authorities cannot afford to maintain their core functions, so why create yet more responsibility? In 2017 77% of respondents to a demographically-weighted ComRes poll expressed clear concern about these issues.

It is well-documented that the ban on smacking in Sweden has been followed by a substantial rise in child-on-child violence and in indiscipline in schools. The risk to Welsh society is clear.
Furthermore, surveys of public opinion clearly indicate that the proposals are out of step with the country. The 2017 ComRes poll found that 76% of Welsh adults were against criminalising smacking, while only 11% were in favour.

These proposals should be ditched at the earliest possible moment as ideological, impractical and undemocratic.

1.3 **Do you think there is a need for legislation to deliver what this Bill is trying to achieve?**

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

Emphatically NO!

see above answer to Question 1.2

2 **The Bill’s implementation**

2.1 **Do you have any comments about any potential barriers to implementing the Bill? If no, go to question 3.1**

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

Yes

The opposition of the majority of people in Wales

2.2 **Do you think the Bill takes account of these potential barriers?**

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

No

This is an ideological assault on common sense.

Answers I have received to my previous objections have been dismissive. For example, Mark Drakeford did not address my concerns, merely justifying his position as mandated by Labour's election Manifesto.

3 **Unintended consequences**

3.1 **Do you think there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill? If no, go to question 4.1**

*(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)*

Yes
Deeply dangerous ones, as outlined briefly in my answer to Question 1.2

Plus, increasing the current trend towards a police state, undermining personal and family freedoms

4  Financial implications

4.1  Do you have any comments on the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum)? If no, go to question 5.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

Yes - see above

Especially, actual costs to police, courts and social services. There are far more important aspect of their work that deserve appropriate funding. If funding of the outcomes of these proposed changes is intended, it is a travesty of justice.

5  Other considerations

5.1  Do you have any other points you wish to raise about this Bill?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

There are others, but as a very busy person I've run out of time