

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i [ymgyngoriad y Pwyllgor Biliau Diwygio](#) ar [Fil Senedd Cymru \(Aelodau ac Etholiadau\)](#).

This response was submitted to the [Reform Bill Committee consultation](#) on the [Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill](#).

SCME421 Ymateb gan: | Response from: John Butler

01/11/2023

Dear Committee

[Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill \(proposals\)](#)

I am writing to you as a private person and long-standing resident of Wales with no current or past affiliation to any political party. I wish you to note my objections and comments in respect of the above, as detailed below.

I am most concerned to hear of serious [proposals to augment the number of Senedd Members and amend the electoral system in Wales](#). To my view, what is proposed is a recipe for disaster. I can find nothing in the proposals that will enhance the standing of the relationship between the people of Wales and those who determine their future prospects of civic contentment and peaceful and meaningful enjoyment.

The requirement for -and cost of increasing the number of AMs- cannot be justified. The proposals neither recognise -nor takes account- the considerable work-load that the side-by-side, UK Parliamentary representatives in each Welsh constituency have done since the inception of the Welsh Assembly- on behalf of the electorate that they represent.

If any change is needed it would be to insist that the current number of elected have a duty to set higher standards of proficiency and that the Assembly should seek to have a permanent position for a representative of the UK Parliament!



In the current climate of value-for-money, the additional funding from the public-purse, of some thirty-odd additional AMs is not trifling. Given the notion of "job-sharing" contained in these proposals, why is the sharing of the existing budget for AM's -between whatever might be the new increased seat-hold, being given consideration?

In respect of the proposals to change the electoral system, these are, to say the least, extreme measures, more suited to the ethos of a one-party, totalitarian state -and completely unexpected! The proposals for the Assembly constituency delegates to be chosen from a pre-determined PARTY list runs contrary to the long-established concept of local preference, according to personal reputation and known competences. I can find no reference to the inclusion of these this objectives in any previous government or party manifesto and find that any suggestion that such substantive measures can be discussed in routine debate on the Assembly floor, without a prior National referendum most unsettling.

Like many of my acquaintance and years of life-experience, I am left wondering, what has happened to the concepts of "Chwarae Teg" in today's Wales?

At the present time I sense that the current manifestation of devolved Government in Wales is unrepresentative of the aspirations and concerns of the majority of ordinary people. From river pollution control and waste disposal to education curriculum and highways maintenance and traffic management, our Governance seems only to excel at every opportunity for cultural grandstanding and opportunity for centralised, top-down, unrelenting control. These proposals, if enacted, will do nothing to engage with everyday folk; instead, I assert they would further distance the population from decision-making and provoke despair and civil unrest.

It is my observation that governance in Wales is struggling to be a transparent and cohesive force for the common good; it offers little prospect of a future built on personal responsibility, shared values and a robust but fair civic infrastructure. I assert that if enacted, these proposals would be harmful and undemocratic and likely to widen the gulf between ordinary citizen stakeholders and the dominant political elite.

I hope that in every respect that what is currently proposed is defeated.

With the exception of my personal contact data, I give my consent for my observations and views to be placed in the Public Domain. Kindly acknowledge receipt of this communication in due course.

Yours faithfully

John Butler