

SCECLB83 Individual

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Biliau Diwygio | Reform Bill Committee

Bil Senedd Cymru (Rhestrau Ymgeiswyr Etholiadol) | Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Ymateb gan Unigolyn | Evidence from Individual

What are your views on the general principles of the Bill and the need for legislation to deliver the Welsh Government's stated policy objective (to make the Senedd a more effective legislature by ensuring it is broadly representative of the gender make-up of the population)?

I am in general agreement that there should be gender balance within the Senedd which represents the make-up of the Welsh population. I'm not sure that gender is the correct term to use, however. I think we are actually talking about a sex balance - that is numbers of male and female Senedd members which reflect the Welsh population.

What are your views on the system of enforcement and potential sanctions for non-compliance proposed in the Bill?

Whether this works depends on what the definition of a woman is, doesn't it? If anyone can state they are a woman 'because they say they are' then males may also stand as women which makes a mockery of gender balancing in the Senedd. This is another reason why sex should be the term used - male or female - and not gender, that way the term woman clearly means an adult human female.

Are there any potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions? If so, what are they, and are they adequately taken into account in the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum and Regulatory Impact Assessment?

An important barrier to the Bill's Provision, and its success, is the lack of precise language and definition of the terms gender and woman. Gender means biological sex in this instance and woman means adult human female. Or at least they should if the Bill is really going to ensure accurate representation of the Welsh population. Another barrier is the fact that this Bill goes beyond the powers of Welsh Government devolution and against the Equality Act 2010. The UK Government are likely going to take action to prevent it. One wonders why the Welsh Government are

so set on pursuing it, and likely wasting a lot of time and money on this Bill, only to have it blocked in the same way Scotland did with their GRA Reform /Self-ID bid. It seems purely ideological and I think it is likely the Welsh population will not be impressed if the Welsh Government waste resources on this Bill, and go against advice they've been given to the contrary.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

Oh yes, males will get places in the Senedd instead of females when they state they are woman. That will not reflect a balance of the sexes in the Senedd. Or maybe that IS the intention?

What are your views on the Welsh Government's assessment of the financial and other impacts of the Bill?

The Welsh Government have not considered the time and money they will waste on pursuing this Bill when it is beyond their powers under devolution and it will be blocked. What an appalling waste of resources at a time when so much of Welsh infrastructure is crumbling - shameful.

What are your views on the balance between the information contained on the face of the Bill and what is left to subordinate legislation? Are the powers for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation appropriate?

This Bill should be dropped full stop as it is beyond Welsh Government powers and poorly thought through.

Do you have any views on matters relating to the legislative competence of the Senedd including compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights?

Yes, the Welsh Government is showing itself to be completely incompetent as it is forging ahead with a Bill that goes beyond their powers of devolution and which goes against provisions of the Equality Act 2010, especially with regard to sex as a protected characteristic.

Do you have any views on matters related to the quality of the legislation, or to the constitutional or other implications of the Bill?

Yes, it's poor legislation, poorly defined and poorly thought through. It will be a waste of resources at a time when serious governance is needed.

Are there any other issues that you would like to raise about the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum or any related matters?

Think I've said it all.

Anything else?

The Welsh Government should abandon this Bill before they waste any more time and money on it, and if they don't want to make the electorate angry. The UK Government will block it as they did in Scotland.