

SCECLB93 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)?

You are trying to solve a non-existent problem. Excluding the first election in 1999, female representation in the Senedd has never been lower than 42% (the international average in 2021 was 26%). There is a problem with the number of women who put themselves forward for elected office at all levels of government, but it isn't that parties are unwilling to select them or voters are unwilling to vote for them. Equality is not a game of maths, it's about culture.

A 50/50 parliament also does not guarantee a better legislature. And the 'principle' is completely undermined if you change the meaning of women to allow men to identify as women.

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

This is self-id by the back door. It is unenforceable.

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?

The Senedd does not have the legal competence to enact this bill - it has been told this by the Westminster government and the Senedd's presiding officer. The Welsh Government just doesn't want to listen.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

Yes, and the Welsh Government has been repeatedly told this - if you allow men to identify as women, then you are not increasing the representation of women.

Gender quotas also have the potential to undermine efforts to increase the number of members from other underrepresented groups – in fact, even women from underrepresented groups. Natasha Asghar, the second of two Conservative women elected on the South East Wales regional list at the last election and the first woman of colour ever elected to the Senedd, might not have got in under a gender quota.

This is an arbitrary and tokenistic policy to address a non-existent problem that will not ensure the best people are elected.

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

The Welsh Government, as with much of its policy making, doesn't care about either - it does what it wants regardless, so my views are negative.

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?

No.

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

The Senedd does not have legislative competence to enact this bill. This doesn't change merely by claiming otherwise.

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

Please see my previous answers. This is an unnecessary and poorly considered piece of legislation that will have negative consequences.

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

N/A

Anything else?

I wish to stress that this is self-ID by the back door. A gender balanced Senedd is not achieved by allowing men to identify as women.