

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 Ann Thomas | Evidence from Ann Thomas

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 against this bill as it is currently worded. There was a time when the terms sex and gender could have been used interchangeably but no longer. Gender now describes how any person feels about themselves and as a category is therefore impossible to meaningfully pin down in a legal framework. I would assume the purpose of this bill is to tackle the historic underrepresentation of women in our democratic institutions. Therefore, why not use the term sex as its meaning is unambiguous and clearly defined in law.

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

This is self ID by stealth. Any man can claim to be a woman and you propose this would be uncontested. We therefore could have a Senedd that was 50% men and 50% men who claim they are women. How on earth could this situation further the rights and participation of women in politics. I am completely opposed.

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?

They go against the basic rule of fairness to women. I'm not a legal expert but I hope they contravene UK law. I hope we are protected by the Equality Act.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

If you pass this bill you will have shown yourselves to be unfit to represent the needs of 51.1% of the Welsh people and will be out of sync with the world as it thankfully moves away from gender ideology.

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

I've no idea how much it costs to defend legal challenges but you'll be squandering tax payers money. I think you have more urgent things which need this money - the NHS?

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?

I have no idea

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

I have no idea but I know it flies in the face of women's rights.

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

I think I've already set out my concerns. The Welsh government continues to draft legislation without reference to ALL its stakeholders namely women. They have consistently refused to meet with women's organisations on a whole host of matters and label anyone who disagrees with their views as bigots. They are tarnishing the reputation of the Senedd and making people question devolution itself.

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

Not at this moment

Anything else?

No