

SCECLB430 Eleanor Hill

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 Eleanor Hill | Evidence from Eleanor Hill

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)?

In order for this to be effective in creating a government in which women's lives, needs and views are held to be as valuable as men's you need to be able to define your terminology. In the view of the vast majority of people in the world the word woman exclusively means people of the female sex who have reached adulthood. This is also my view. The bill fails in that regard and could therefore promote serious inequalities while claiming to champion equality.

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

At a minimum basic checks of legal documentation should be required along with any necessary statements. In the UK this would mean provision of a birth certificate. Personally I believe candidates should be required to sign a statement regarding whether their birth certificates have been emended at any time and for what reason. It is not unusual to be asked to provide a birth certificate for certain roles.

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?

Public trust will be lost if the bill continues in its present form.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

Again a loss of public trust and the contamination of valuable data on sex discrimination and the experiences of women in power.

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

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?

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 would refer the Senedd to recent statements from Reem Alsalem who was appointed United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences in July 2021 by the UN Human Rights Council.

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

Welsh Government needs to reflect across all departments on its inability to recognise the importance of the protected characteristic of sex as covered in the Equality Act 2010 and under which legislation WG is bound to operate.

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

Anything else?