

SCECLB468 Gary Owen

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 Gary Owen | Evidence from Gary Owen

I'm writing to register my objections to the proposed closed list voting system for future Senedd elections.

A number of committees and working parties put in place by Welsh government to look into voting systems specifically rejected the closed list system, noting that it puts more power into the hands of party bureaucracy and breaks the link between the elector and the elected. These objections have been made at length by people far more qualified than me, and I won't repeat them here; but I do endorse them.

But on a personal level, I would appeal to the leadership of the Labour party in Wales to think very carefully about this change. Labour has long enjoyed a seemingly permanent majority in Wales. That gives it the freedom to push through deeply unpopular legislation - eg the 20mph speed limit - with impunity, knowing that it will face no real challenge at the next election. But in the Western democracies over the past decade we have seen what happens when ruling establishments ignore the the feelings of the people. In the end, disenchanted with the mainstream, people turn to more extreme figures that claim to offer real change. I fear we are nearing that point in Wales. And I would beg the Labour leadership to consider very carefully, to act with humility, and to listen to the people.

Yn gywir

Gary Owen.