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Chair, Legislation Justice and Constitution Committee
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15 October 2024

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 20 September seeking my views on the laying of certain statutory instruments bilingually. My department and I recognise the importance in ensuring the accessibility of Welsh law in both languages.

I am grateful to your committee for considering this issue. I note as part of this work you have obtained views in particular from the Procedure Committees in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Whilst both have indicated that there appears to be no procedural bar on the laying of bilingual statutory instruments, the Chair of the House of Commons Procedure Committee stated this was in circumstances in which the relevant Act required it. I am not aware of any statutory requirements that prescribe the language in which the SI is to be made in. No reference to language is made for example in respect of the power to make Orders in Council in section 109 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 that must be approved by both Houses of Parliament and the Senedd.

In absence of such a requirement the default position will therefore be that they can be laid in English only. However, it would be open, subject to agreement between the UK and Welsh Governments, for any new powers of this nature to specify that the relevant statutory instrument should be made bilingually.

I have asked my officials to look into this matter further, and would welcome any additional views from your committee.

Yours sincerely,



Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP
Secretary of State for Wales
Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru