

## **SCECLB346 Individual**

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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

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### **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 believe we are legislating without yet knowing whether the system will create a gender balanced Parliament anyway. This legislation may also have the effect of reducing the representative nature of the Parliament with regards to other protected characteristics.

This legislation will also directly affect smaller parties much more than larger parties who have a larger talent pool and volunteers wishing to put their names forward. Many parties would love to have better gender equality but are in a position where females don't put themselves forward for roles as readily or have other competing priorities.

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

Sanctions against smaller parties that are less able to run a full slate of mixed female and male candidates is undemocratic in the extreme. Many of these parties are self funded and can't rely on handouts from large businesses, and thus would fold if economic sanctions were applied. This would be as undemocratic as limiting their ability to stand.

**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?**

By legislating to force gender balance there is a high likelihood, that other protected characteristics will be negatively affected in their levels of representation. It is likely that it could lead to claims of bias against other minorities.

**Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?**

See above

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

Financially it is sound, but not the effect on smaller parties or minorities.

**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?**

As long as they don't have too many powers to denigrate democracy, such as what we have seen in Westminster where democracy is a sham at best. Ministers should not have the power to bring forward any secondary legislation that could be harmful to democracy and the chances of smaller parties of achieving representation in the Senedd.

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

No

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

No

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

No

**Anything else?**

No