

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 Linda Ferguson | Evidence from Linda Ferguson

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'm not sure what you mean by "gender make-up", there are males and females. Some of these may not identify as such but with the Welsh Parliament having previously achieved 50/50, the Bill is unnecessary.

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

The Bill requirement for a 'gender statement' i.e. you are, or are not, a woman is without definition. I assume you mean sex. How will you know who is a woman, how will you challenge it. It is open to abuse. Self declaration is not the law in the UK.

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?

The Bill is discriminatory as it does not comply with the 2010 Equality Act.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

The Bill supports women already standing but removes no barriers which prevent women in general standing for political office.

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

If this Bill goes to the Supreme Court, this will be costly and damaging to Wales.

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?

Equalities legislation is a reserved matter, not devolved.

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

The Bill has no legislative competence. It is likely to end up in the Supreme Court.

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

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?