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Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Local Government and Government Business



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

David Melding AM
Chair, Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

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Dear David

We have spoken about the Wales Bill in Business Committee and, of course, the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee was invited to consider and report on the Wales Bill LCM.

The next stage of Parliamentary scrutiny of the Bill is the House of Commons Report and Third Reading stages scheduled for 24 June. The UK Government has just tabled amendments for Report stage which are now published on the Parliament website. Given its potential significance, I thought it appropriate to draw your attention to one of the amendments, although I should immediately say that this is not obviously relevant to your consideration of the LCM (as it does not touch on the legislative powers of the Assembly), nor does it have any effect on the Standing Order 30 written statement (since it does not affect Welsh Ministers' powers).

Amendment 6 would allow for an Order under clause 11 (which would make provision for the conduct of a Referendum about commencement of income tax provisions) to enable the Electoral Commission to designate an organisation as the lead campaign group on one side of the referendum outcome only (ie it could designate a lead campaigner on either the 'yes' or 'no' side, which organisation might then be able to access the kinds of assistance available to designated organisations), without having to designate a lead organisation on the 'other' side. As you will well recall, this option was not available at the time of the 2011 Assembly powers referendum and I thought that this was significant enough an amendment that your Committee would wish to be aware of it. I understand that the inclusion of this new provision follows discussions between the Commission and the Wales Office.

I hope this is helpful.

Regards
Lesley

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