

Elin Jones AM  
Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

4 February 2020

### **Renting Homes (Amendment) (Wales) Bill**

Annwyl Elin

Thank you for your letter dated 23 January 2020 about the timetable for this Bill.

We note that the ten sitting weeks for Stage 1 Committee consideration is two weeks fewer than the usual practice of 12 weeks. While we acknowledge that the Bill itself is quite short, consisting of 18 sections and six schedules, the changes proposed in the Bill are quite controversial. In the Welsh Government's own consultation, 88% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to extend the minimum notice period from two to six months. However, the divide between tenants and landlords was stark, with 95% of landlords against the move, and 70% of tenants in favour (those tenants who disagreed with the change were also landlords).<sup>1</sup>

We are also aware from our previous legislative scrutiny work on the Renting Homes (Fees) (Wales) Act that it can be challenging to ensure we hear a broad range of views from those most affected by the changes: tenants and landlords. In particular, getting the views of tenants can be particularly challenging as there are few groups which represent tenants, and no one single group that can be considered to be representative of all tenants. We envisage that we will therefore need to seek tenant's views in more informal ways. Such engagement methods clearly take time to set up and run, which can be problematic when faced with a tight timetable.

One Member has "grave concerns" about the time available to scrutinise the Bill. However, overall, while we think it is far from ideal to only have 10 weeks available to the Committee to scrutinise a Bill that will make significant changes

---

<sup>1</sup> [Welsh Government, Consultation – Summary of responses Increasing the minimum notice period for a 'no fault eviction', January 2020](#)

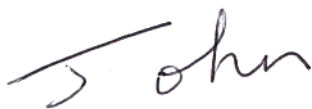


to both tenants and landlords' rights, we believe that we will be able to conduct our scrutiny within the timeframe available.

We would like to highlight to Business Committee that the time available to the Committee to scrutinise this Bill is also further restricted because we also have to accommodate Stage 2 proceedings on the Local Government Bill within the same timeframe. This means that in effect we will have to complete all our work, including the consideration of the draft report, in eight sitting weeks rather than the ten noted in the timetable.

The Minister's paper notes that the Government intend to bring forward a Social Partnership Bill before summer recess, and that is likely to fall within our remit. The paper says that Business Committee may wish to consider whether there are other options for a responsible committee available to it. For the purposes of our work planning, it would be helpful for the Business Committee to make an "in principle" decision on which committee this Bill may be referred to, and for the Welsh Government to indicate roughly when they might expect to introduce this Bill (with the understanding that this may be subject to change).

Yours sincerely



John Griffiths

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

