

# Initiate an early Senedd election

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 13 Tachwedd 2023  
Petitions Committee | 13 November 2023

Reference: SR23/7092/8

**Petition Number:** P-06-1375

**Petition title:** Initiate an early Senedd election

**Text of petition:** After continued failings from Mark Drakeford and his Labour party we request an early election for the chance to vote on a new governing party in Wales. Examples of Welsh Labour failings are their handling of the Covid pandemic, their running of Welsh vocational education systems and also their most recent farce: the new 20mph speed limits being introduced in Wales. The Welsh economy is floundering and change needs to happen. Time for a new leader in the Senedd.



# 1. Background

## 1.1. Ordinary general elections

Section 3 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 (“GoWA”) provides for ‘ordinary’ general elections to be held for the Senedd on the first Thursday in May every five calendar years.

The ordinary general election is prohibited from being held on the same day as a UK parliamentary general election, and Welsh Ministers are therefore provided with the power to vary the date of the Senedd general election to avoid such a clash.

The Senedd’s Presiding Officer also has a power under section 4 of GoWA to vary the date of an ordinary general election by up to one month before, or one month after, the first Thursday in May.

The Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill, which is currently going through stage one scrutiny in the Senedd, would decrease the length of time between Senedd ordinary general elections from five to four years.

## 1.2. Extraordinary general elections

As set out in section 5 of GoWA, there are two circumstances where ‘extraordinary’ general elections can be held for the Senedd:

- In the event that at least two-thirds of the total number of Members vote in favour of a motion that the Senedd is to be dissolved; or
- In the event that the Senedd is unable to appoint a First Minister within 28 days of either a general election or the office of First Minister becoming vacant (for example, by the Senedd resolving to no longer have confidence in the First Minister or the First Minister tending their resignation).

If either of these circumstances were to occur, the Presiding Officer would be required to propose a day for the holding of an extraordinary general election.

If an extraordinary general election is held within six months of the next scheduled ordinary general election, that ordinary general election would not

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need to be held. For example, if an extraordinary general election was held after 7 November 2025, the next scheduled ordinary general election on Thursday 7 May 2026 would not be held.

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