Statement of Reasons Regarding Consultation in Accordance with Scottish Parliament Standing Orders Rule 9.14 paragraph 3(B)

In relation to my draft proposal for a St. Andrew's Day Bank Holiday Bill, I do not consider that consultation on the draft is required for the following reasons:

- A consultation paper on a St. Andrew's Day Bank Holiday was published by me on 29 July 2004 with a submission deadline of 31 October 2004. The main areas of consultation were: potential benefits and problems arising from the establishment of a St. Andrew's Day bank holiday; ways in which the day could become a national celebration of cultural diversity; potential economic impact of making the day a bank holiday; options regarding the actual day on which the proposed bank holiday be taken.

- Over 150 copies of the consultation paper were sent in hard copy to various groups and individuals, including those from the business sector, the voluntary sector, trade unions and other representative organisations, ethnic minority groups, faith groups, political groups and individual politicians, equality groups and members of the public. In addition, over 100 electronic copies were sent out, including domestic and international recipients. The consultation paper is available on my website from which 81 copies have been downloaded during the course of the consultation period. A press statement was also issued regarding the proposal.

- A total of 133 substantive responses have been received from a range of organisations and individuals. A summary of responses and copies of all responses (excluding any made in confidence) will be placed in SPICe with my final proposal and will be made available to the lead committee.

- Given that a recent consultation exercise has been undertaken, I consider that there is no need to carry out a further consultation. There has been adequate opportunity for the public to comment on what is being proposed and this in turn has helped to test, develop and refine my proposal.

I therefore request the Committee to consider the above statement and confirm that it is satisfied with the reasons for not consulting on the draft proposal.

Dennis Canavan
12 November 2004