Mr Mark Ruskell: Proposed Liability for Release of Genetically Modified Organisms (Scotland) Bill

Proposal for a Bill to amend the law of damages in relation to the release of genetically modified organisms by making the holder of the consent to release strictly liable for economic damages that result from GM contamination.

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Mark Ruskell MSP Date

Statement of Reasons by Mark Ruskell MSP

In relation to my draft proposal for a GM Liability Bill, I do not consider that a consultation on the draft proposal for 12 weeks from the date of lodging is required for the following reasons.

I produced a consultation paper and ran a 12 week consultation from November 2003 to February 2004. The consultation paper was sent to a wide spectrum of stakeholders, ranging from the biotechnology industry to NGOs and individuals campaigning against the introduction of GMOs and including food industry bodies, academic institutions and local authorities. A range of responses representing a wide range of interests was received, and passed to NEBU for analysis. Since the consultation closed, I have taken into account all the responses received and have incorporated many of the points raised in the development of detailed policy.

The draft proposal lodged with NEBU differs slightly from the proposal on which I consulted last year in that it specifies economic damages as the area to be legislated on; however, the text of the consultation paper made it clear that the Bill would focus on this aspect of liability, and not address environmental or personal injury.

Given therefore that a full and open consultation process has already been conducted into the issues that my Bill proposal addresses, I do not consider that a further period of consultation is necessary.

I therefore request that the Committee considers this statement of reasons, and confirms that it is satisfied that no further consultation is required.

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Mark Ruskell MSP Date