

PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

COMMITTEE REQUEST TO MEET DURING PLENARY

Introduction

1. The Parliamentary Bureau is invited to consider a request from the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee to meet from 3 to approximately 4pm (at the same time as Scottish Labour Party business) on Wednesday 22 June 2022. The purpose of this meeting is to hold an evidence session with Senator Regina Doherty, Leader of the Irish Senate (Seanad Éireann). The Committee requires to hear from the Senator as part of its scrutiny of the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

Background to Request

2. The Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee is the lead committee for scrutiny of the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1 and has been taking oral evidence on a weekly basis since Tuesday 17 May 2022.
3. The Committee's agreed approach is to conclude its oral evidence sessions on Tuesday 28 June 2022, when it will hear from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government.
4. The Committee invited Senator Doherty to give evidence as part of an "international perspective" panel scheduled for Tuesday 21 June 2022. Due to her Senate commitments the Senator is only available on the afternoons of Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 June. The Committee recognises there are Stage 3 proceedings on the Thursday afternoon, at which Members may be required to vote at any time. This makes the Wednesday afternoon the only viable option.
5. The Committee considers Senator Doherty's evidence will be of significant value in its scrutiny of the Bill. As Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection in the Dáil Éireann, she commissioned a post-legislative [review](#) of Ireland's Gender Recognition Act 2015.
6. The clerks have explored possible alternative dates and times, however, due to the Senator's commitments and the Committee's planned informal private engagement events, scheduled for evenings during weeks commencing 20 and 27 June, this has not been possible.

Decision

7. Business Managers are therefore invited to consider the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee's request and to recommend to the Parliament that the Committee be given permission to meet from 3pm on Wednesday 22 June 2022 for the purposes of taking formal evidence on the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

**Parliamentary Business Team
June 2022**