

Parliamentary Bureau - Legislative Consent Memorandum

Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill (UK legislation)

Introduction

1. Under Rule 9B.3.5, the Parliamentary Bureau is required to refer any legislative consent memorandum (LCM) that has been lodged with the Parliament to the committee within whose remit the subject matter of the relevant provision falls.

Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill

2. This Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 16 October 2024.
3. An LCM was lodged by Mairi Gougeon, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, under Rule 9B.3.1(b) of the Parliament's Standing Orders on 3 June 2025, and is supported by Jim Fairlie, Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity.
4. The Bill introduces an enabling power to address the problem of low-welfare imports of dogs, cats and ferrets into the United Kingdom. The power must be used to prohibit the bringing into Great Britain of puppies and kittens under six months and dogs and cats that are mutilated or heavily pregnant.
5. The Bill also seeks to address the current issue of commercial imports being disguised as non-commercial movements by amending the rules that govern the non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets into Great Britain from third countries.
6. The LCM indicates that the Scottish Government intends to lodge a motion seeking the Scottish Parliament's consent to all relevant provisions in the Bill.

Designation of lead committee

7. The relevant provisions in the Bill fall within the remit of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee. The Committee's remit is "to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, with the exception of matters relating to land reform, natural resources and peatland, Scottish Land Commission, Crown Estate Scotland, and Royal Botanic Garden."
8. The responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity, who supports the LCM and reports to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, include animal health and welfare. Given the Bill relates to animal welfare, there is a clear link between the Minister's responsibilities and the subject-matter of the LCM.

9. The LCM will also be considered by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee in relation to any provisions in the Bill conferring powers on the Scottish Ministers to make subordinate legislation.

Recommendation

10. The Bureau is invited to refer, under Rule 9B.3.5, the LCM to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee as lead committee.

Parliamentary Business Team
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