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Sue Webber
Convener
Education, Children and Young People Committee
Scottish Parliament
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20 December 2023

Dear Convener,

Thank you for the committee's ongoing careful consideration of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill ahead of the Stage 2 deadline of 9 February.

My letter of 28 November outlined how I intended to use the additional time presented by the deadline extension to engage with committee members to ensure the greatest possible consensus.

I am also grateful for the chance to meet with you directly on 22 November, where we agreed how important it is for the government work closely with Members in pursuit of our shared ambitions in advance of Stage 2. I have since met with the majority of Members and am grateful for the productive discussions.

As I set out in my previous correspondence, there are a number of areas where the committee has a substantially unified view, and where the aims of the Committee and I are shared. This view has been reinforced in my recent bilateral meetings.

I have valued those discussions and those I have held with stakeholders, and can confirm I plan to bring forward amendments on matters of common concern at Stage 2, including:

- Victims' information and support
- Movement Restriction (MRC) conditions.
- Non-harassment orders and the remittal framework under the Bill.
- Secure transport – standards, regulation and oversight.
- Reporting restrictions regarding children involved in court proceedings
- Cross-border placements.

The recent cross-party support for the UNCRC (Incorporation) Bill at reconsideration stage shows what can be achieved when consensus is reached. I hope we can take a similar approach to the important issues covered in the Children (Care and Justice) Bill.

I intend to continue engagement with committee members. My door remains open for further discussions as we move towards Stage 2.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Don'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'N' and a circular flourish around the 'D'.

Natalie Don