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Fògarraich
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Kaukab Stewart MSP
Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice
Committee
By email: ehrcj.committee@parliament.scot

15 December 2023

Dear Convener,

I am writing to update the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on the Scottish Government's plans for bringing forward legislation on ending conversion practices in Scotland, given the Committee's previous work and continued interest on this issue.

As the Committee is aware, the Scottish Government is committed to introducing legislation on ending conversion practices in Scotland. We have committed to working together with the Committee in order to do this in a way that avoids the need for survivors of conversion practices to give repeated evidence, but which does not prejudice the potential ability of the Committee to scrutinise legislation.

The consultation setting out our proposals for legislative change will be published on 9 January 2024. While the consultation document is ready for publication this year prior to recess, this timescale responds to an ask from a range of stakeholders to avoid publishing the consultation during a holiday period where those with an interest in the proposals work at a lower capacity. A January publication also maximises the opportunity for responses during the twelve-week consultation period. Critically, it also ensures that there is sufficient support available for victims and survivors of conversion practices who may be impacted by this issue.

As you know, public consultation is an extremely important stage of the process of developing legislation. Our consultation will contain clear and detailed information on our proposed approach to addressing conversion practices in law and will allow us to obtain views from stakeholders and the broader public on this complex matter.

We recognise that the consultation process may be traumatising for victims and survivors of conversion practices. To ensure there is sufficient support available, we are providing funding to support the delivery of a helpline service for survivors in Scotland.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

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I will inform the Committee when the 'Ending Conversion Practices in Scotland' consultation has been launched and would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have around our proposals.

Yours sincerely,

EMMA RODDICK

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