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The Scottish Parliament

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I am writing in response to your correspondence of 20 December 2023 regarding Stage 1 scrutiny of the National Care Service (NCS) (Scotland) Bill. You specifically requested a comparison of anticipated timelines for progressing passage of the legislation through Parliament according to the following two scenarios:

- 1) Withdrawing the current Bill and preparing and introducing a new Bill reflecting the consensus agreement on shared legal accountability;
- 2) Bringing forward amendments to the Bill as introduced at Stage 2 that would reflect the consensus agreement on shared legal accountability.

I would like to be clear that the Scottish Government will not withdraw the Bill. Given the investment of time and experience from many individuals and organisations so far, I do not wish to speculate on an option the Government does not intend to take.

With regard to timing of Stage 2, my correspondence of 6 December 2023 to the Committee committed to ensuring that the Scottish Government provides sufficient information on a timescale which would enable the Committee to consider proposals for Scottish Government Stage 2 amendments at the level of scrutiny it reasonably requires and I reaffirm that now. Therefore, should Parliament agree the general principles of the Bill at Stage 1, the Scottish Government will work with the Committee to agree an appropriate Stage 2 deadline.



MAREE TODD MSP

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