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Mr Edward Mountain MSP  
Convener Net Zero, Energy and Transport  
Committee

By email only.

Dear Edward,

I hope that the Committee found the recent evidence sessions and Royal Highland Show event on the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill informative. We are actively considering the stakeholder evidence that the Committee has been receiving as part of your Stage 1 evidence gathering process and look forward to your report in due course.

I wanted to give you early notice that we will be bringing forward a number of Stage 2 Government amendments to Part 2 of the Bill relating to small landholdings. As you will be aware, small landholding provisions are currently spread over a number of Acts, some dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Your evidence session on the 18 June 2024 with legal experts highlighted a desire amongst the panel members to consolidate small landholding legislation to make it more accessible, and it is our intention is to use this Bill to take this forward. This will require a significant volume of new material which will expand the small landholding schedule.

To ensure consistency for small landholders, further amendments to the Bill provisions on small landholdings will be needed in order to align with tenant farming legislation on matters including pre-emptive right-to-buy, diversification, succession and assignment.

I will be writing to you in the autumn to share more detail on the proposed amendments, which I hope that this will support the Committee in considering the Government's intended approach before Stage 1 completes.

My officials would be happy to talk to you and the Committee about this should this be helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**MAIRI GOUGEON**

