

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Katie Hagmann MSP
Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice
Committee
Email: EHRCJ.committee@parliament.scot

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Dear Katie,

I am writing to update you on our next steps in relation to ending conversion practices in Scotland.

Following the publication of the UK Government's draft Bill on ending conversion practices we have been giving consideration as to whether to seek the extension of the draft Bill to Scotland. As the Committee will be aware, the draft Bill currently only applies to England and Wales.

We are committed to working with the UK Government in good faith to explore extending the Bill to cover Scotland following the pre-legislative scrutiny period. We understand that the pre-legislative scrutiny period will take approximately six months, following which the Joint Committee will publish its recommendations.

I believe that there is strength in committing to a Bill that covers England, Wales and Scotland as this brings together three governments working together on legislation to advance equality for the LGBTQI+ community across the UK. However, should the UK Government fail to deliver we will introduce our own Bill to end conversion practices in Scotland.

I have written to both the UK Government Minister for Equalities, Simon Lightwood, and the Welsh Deputy First Minister, Sioned Williams, asking for a discussion on next steps. I am also committed to engaging extensively with a range of Scottish stakeholders on our proposed approach including LGBTQI+ stakeholders, faith and belief stakeholders and our justice partners in Scotland.

Given the Committee's previous interest on ending conversion practices, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

SIMITA KUMAR

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot