The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

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Dear Stephanie

Thank you for your letter regarding the amendment to the Education (Scotland) Bill on the length of the school week.

Now that the Bill has progressed to Stage 3, the Committee's formal role in proceedings has come to an end. Consideration of any further amendments at Stage 3 will take place in the Chamber and will involve the whole Parliament. Therefore, I am afraid that there is no further opportunity for the Committee to act in relation to the concerns you raise.

However, I have ensured your letter is circulated to Committee members and published on the Parliament's website[1]. MSPs will, therefore, be able to consider your view should they wish to lodge amendments at Stage 3.

I note your concerns about the lack of forewarning from the Scottish Government about its plans to introduce the amendment in question.

As we highlighted in our Stage 1 report[2], the Scottish Government did not consult on all sections of the Bill in advance of its introduction, in part because some provisions were added at a late stage. While we acknowledged the Scottish Government's prerogative to introduce provisions later on, we stated this made our scrutiny more difficult. The Committee, therefore, recommended that detailed consultation should, wherever possible, be carried out in advance of a Bill's publication and that, if
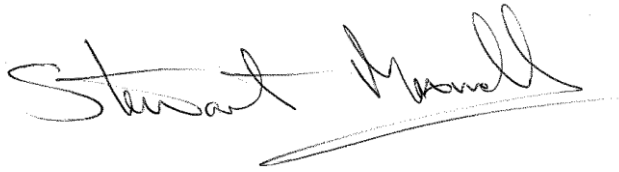
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[1] Letter from COSLA, 14 December 2015. Available at: [insert link]
[2] Education and Culture Committee Stage 1 report on the Education (Scotland) Bill, paragraph 6. Available at:
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/92072.aspx#report

consultation is not undertaken, the Scottish Government should explain why this is the case.

Yours sincerely

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CONVENER