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Bruce Crawford MSP  
Convener  
Devolution (Further Powers) Committee  
c/o Clerk to the Committee  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Dear Bruce,

I would like to extend my thanks to you and the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee for your extensive work over the last year in scrutinising the Scotland Bill.

The Committee's detailed examination of the Scotland Bill, culminating in the final report being published on 11<sup>th</sup> March, is testament to the work of all members to gather and marshal a broad range of evidence. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to provide evidence to your Committee and inform the process. The significant time and resource you have brought to bear on providing the UK Government with constructive analysis during the Bill's development and passage through the UK Parliament has been invaluable. There can be no doubt that the legislation has been strengthened as a result. I am pleased that Lord Smith of Kelvin stated that the Bill honours the agreement of the five parties in Scotland and that with the agreement of the Fiscal Framework, the recommendations of the Smith Commission have been delivered in full. The Scotland Bill and the agreement of the fiscal framework that underpins it demonstrate how the UK and Scottish Governments and Parliaments can work effectively together in Scotland's interests.

I look forward to the Scottish Parliament's debate on the Legislative Consent Motion for the Bill. The remaining stages of the Bill are subject to Parliamentary scheduling, agreed through the usual channels, but I can inform you that a provisional date of Monday 21 March has been given for Third Reading in the House of Lords. It is expected that Commons Consideration of Lords Amendments (CCLA) will follow soon afterwards, representing a significant step towards the Bill gaining Royal Assent.

As we approach elections in May to what will in effect be a new Scottish Parliament, I am expecting a lively debate about how these new powers should be used to improve the lives of people in Scotland.

**Rt Hon DAVID MUNDELL MP  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND**