Dear Minister

I am writing to you on behalf of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee to draw to your attention the publication of the Committee’s second quarterly report for this session which can be found here:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S5_Delegated_Powers/Quarter_2_Report__.pdf

The Committee welcomes the reduction of instruments brought to the Parliament’s attention under significant grounds; just one instrument was drawn to the attention of Parliament for being defectively drafted, compared to three last quarter.

However, we note with concern that almost 25% of all instruments laid by the Scottish Government this quarter were drawn to the Parliament’s attention, compared to just 10% last quarter.

While the Committee recognises that fewer instruments were considered this quarter compared to the first quarter of 2016-17, we are concerned that such a significant proportion of those were reported. In particular the Committee notes the significant number of instruments referred to the Local Government and Communities Committee and the Health and Sport Committee that were drawn to the Parliament’s attention.

Annex B of the report lists all outstanding Scottish Government commitments to amend or correct instruments. The Committee welcomes the efforts being made by the Scottish Government to address its commitments promptly. The Committee notes, however, that there continue to be some historic commitments yet to be met.
It is an ambition of our Committee to ensure that demonstrable progress is made by the Scottish Government to address these commitments during Session 5 of the Parliament. We will continue to closely monitor the progress made on these commitments at regular intervals and encourage the Scottish Government to maintain momentum in addressing these commitments.

We wrote to you after the first quarter to welcome the quality of the legislation laid so far this session. It is disappointing that these standards have not been maintained during the second quarter of this parliamentary year. Nonetheless we encourage you in your efforts to improve the quality of legislation and hope to be in a position to write to you in more positive terms at the conclusion of the third quarter of the parliamentary year.

Yours sincerely,

Convener of the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee