



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Equalities and Human Rights Committee

Graham Simpson MSP
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Prescription (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 10 May concerning the above Bill. I have considered the points raised and discussed the relevant issues with the clerks to the Committee.

I understand your Committee has heard evidence from welfare rights organisations and other consultees that suggests there may be merit in wider scrutiny of the processes. In particular:

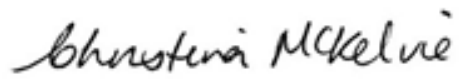
- the broader equalities and human rights aspects of the prescription periods set out in the Bill, and
- the suggestion that the definition in the 1973 Act of “legal disability” (which as the effect of stopping five year prescription from running) as “unsoundness of mind” should be amended to reflect language used today.

I can see that there may be merit in undertaking further examination of these particular issues, although the majority of the emergent issues engage the remits of other parliamentary committees, such as, the Social Security Committee and the Local Government and Communities Committee, who have a more direct interest in social security policy and council tax respectively. I therefore suggest it would be more effective if these aspects were picked up during the course of any inquiries undertaken by these Committees. In addition, our work programme is unlikely to allow for any substantive inquiry to be undertaken. We are already in the midst of considering one substantial Bill and will potentially have two further pieces of legislation to scrutinise in this Parliamentary year.

As such, I do not think the Equalities and Human Rights Committee would be able to commit to taking forward work in this area. I do nevertheless appreciate you

bringing this matter to my attention and wish you well with your consideration of the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina McKelvie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christina McKelvie MSP
Convener
Equalities and Human Rights Committee