



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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**TITLE** WRITTEN STATEMENT – Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

**DATE** 16 September 2024

**BY** Jane Hutt MS: Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

Members will be aware that the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act received Royal Assent in June this year, which will deliver a major series of reforms to our institution, including expanding to 96 Members from 2026.

A separate Bill, the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill concluded its Stage 1 scrutiny in the Senedd in July, and I am grateful for all the contributions from Members to those proceedings.

Tomorrow, the First Minister will set out her policy and legislative priorities for the remainder of this Senedd term, indicating those areas where the Welsh Government will now focus its full energy in delivering tangible outcomes for the people of Wales.

As a result, we are looking across the government at areas where we can implement our policy and legislative objectives in a more practical and timely way.

Following consideration, we have decided to table a motion to withdraw the Bill from further Senedd consideration, which will be debated and voted on in plenary on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

During the Stage 1 debate, representatives of all political parties in the Senedd made clear their commitment to the important area of women's representation in the next Senedd.

We remain committed to a gender balanced Senedd and getting more women into politics, but have reflected over the summer and decided the best way we can achieve practical change for the 2026 Senedd election is to address this issue in a different way.

The withdrawal of this Bill does not prevent political parties considering what action they can implement through their candidate selection processes.

As Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, I am pleased to report that I will accelerate progress on new guidance for political parties in relation to diversity and inclusion, including the representation of women, but also across a broader range of characteristics and circumstances.

This work is already underway, and we will consult publicly on it shortly. The guidance will therefore be available in advance of candidate selection processes by political parties for the 2026 election.

I anticipate this approach will assist delivery of practical, tangible outcomes across the political spectrum with the aim of returning a strong and diverse Senedd which can properly represent the whole of Welsh society.