

BUSINESS PAPERS

Part 1- Section E

WRITTEN STATEMENTS OF OPINION TABLED ON

25 October 1999

R Signifies the Member has declared an interest

OPIN-1999-0023 British Sign Language (BSL)

09 Jul 1999 Raised by

Mick Bates - Montgomeryshire

Peter Black- South Wales West

Michael German OBE - South Wales East

23 Subscribers

Huw Lewis – Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney

Janice Gregory – Ogmere

David Rhys Lloyd – South Wales West

Alison Halford - Delyn

Val Feld - Swansea East

John Marek - Wrexham

Alun Cairns - South Wales West

Janet Ryder - North Wales

Helen Mary Jones - Llanelli

Lorraine Barrett - Cardiff South and Penarth

Rhodri Glyn Thomas - Carmarthen East and Dinefwr

Geraint Davies - Rhondda

Glyn Davies - Mid and West Wales

William Graham JP - South Wales East

Jonathan Morgan - South Wales Central

Brian Gibbons FRCGP - Aberavon

Christine Humphreys - North Wales

Karen Sinclair - Clwyd South

Pauline Jarman - South Wales Central
Kirsty Williams - Brecon and Radnorshire
Jocelyn Davies - South Wales East
Jenny Randerson - Cardiff Central
Richard Edwards - Preseli Pembrokeshire

The Assembly notes 4,000 people attended the British Sign Language (BSL) march in London on 27 June. Despite European legislation passed 10 years ago, the Government has not recognised BSL users as a linguistic minority although 62,000 people in the UK use BSL as their first language.

The Assembly hopes that BSL receives official recognition, as this will give deaf people equal access to information, health care and employment opportunities in their preferred language. It will entitle Deaf children to the quality of education that hearing children enjoy and allow them to develop their own language skills during their formative years.