



Ein cyf/Our ref: IM/FM -/00009/23

Kevin Hollinrake MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
Minister.Hollinrake@beis.gov.uk

16th January 2023

Dear Kevin Hollinrake MP,

I am writing in response to your letter of 10 January about the introduction of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill.

We fundamentally disagree with the aims of this Bill. We do not believe that the way to respond to strikes and industrial action is to introduce new legislation which would curb the right to strike. We believe the way to respond to industrial action is to work in social partnership with employers and unions to find a negotiated resolution.

This Bill represents an unnecessary and unjustified attack on workers' rights and trade unions. Rushed and ill-conceived legislation will only inflict lasting damage to industrial relations across the UK. This Bill will not help to resolve the issues that lie at the heart of current industrial disputes across the public sector.

We are extremely disappointed at the lack of effective engagement in advance of this Bill. Despite weeks of speculation and repeated approaches from Welsh Government officials to your officials, we were only offered a briefing on the day you issued a press notice announcing this Bill would be introduced.

Engagement after proposals have already been announced is of limited value. More broadly, there appears to have been a lack of public consultation about these proposals or indeed dialogue with trade unions and employers who will be affected by these proposals. It is concerning the Bill has been introduced without any real or meaningful consultation or engagement beyond Whitehall.

I am concerned that you consider the impact on devolution to be "incidental". The potential significant impact on a number of devolved public services, for which Welsh Ministers are responsible and accountable, appears to have been largely overlooked.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We share many of the concerns that have been voiced by trade unions and others about the efficacy and impact of this Bill.

I urge the UK Government to withdraw this Bill before it inflicts irrevocable damage to industrial relations in the UK.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

MARK DRAKEFORD

