



Joe FitzPatrick MSP
Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee
The Scottish Parliament

By Email: EHRCJ.committee@parliament.scot

20 January 2023

Dear Convener,

UK GOVERNMENT DECISION TO MAKE A SECTION 35 ORDER IN RELATION TO THE GENDER RECOGNITION REFORM (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Thank you for your letter of 17 January and your invitation to appear before the Committee on Tuesday 24 January at 09:30. I regret I am unavailable due to existing commitments.

However, with all due respect to the Committee, in light of the First Minister's view that this matter will "inevitably end up in court" I believe it would not be appropriate to attend at this time. As you may be aware I wrote to the First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government on Monday 16 January to inform them of my decision to make an order under section 35 of the Scotland Act 1998 preventing the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill from proceeding to Royal Assent. I have attached a copy of that letter here. I understand the Scottish Government is considering the Order and the statement of reasons.

I enclose a copy of my statement to Parliament on Tuesday 17 January and accompanying documents which set out my reasons for using a section 35 order to prevent the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill proceeding to Royal Assent

*Yours sincerely,
Alister*

**THE RT HON. ALISTER JACK MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND**

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