

First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, responds to the EU (Withdrawal) Bill

First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, said:

“Only this week, the Prime Minister pledged to listen to others about the challenges posed by EU withdrawal, calling for unity for the good of the country. Yet, today’s announcement flies firmly in face of her promises.

“I have been clear since the day of the EU referendum result – the UK is leaving the EU and we will work with the UK government to deliver a sensible Brexit and support a bill which provides clarity and certainty for businesses.

“We have repeatedly tried to engage with the UK government and have put forward constructive proposals about how we can deliver a Brexit which honours the result of the referendum, safeguards the economy and respects devolution.

“Regrettably, our attempts to work with the UK government have been flatly ignored. Instead of mature and constructive engagement, the UK government has shown astounding ignorance in the publication of this bill, which is an insult to the devolved nations.

“The UK should be entering Brexit negotiations from a position of unity so we have the best possible chance of securing a good deal with the interests of all parts of the UK at its heart. Instead, the government appears determined to provoke a constitutional conflict we do not need.

“If the bill is not amended, there is no prospect of my government recommending the National Assembly should give legislative consent to it. We will instead investigate ways in which we can use our existing legislative powers to help defend devolution. We will also work closely with the other devolved administrations; indeed, the Scottish First Minister and I will issue a joint statement today, in which we will make clear that we cannot support the bill in its current form.”