



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Michelle O'Neill MLA  
Deputy First Minister  
Northern Ireland Assembly

by email: [REDACT]

19 June 2020

Dear Michelle

I am writing to make you aware that the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 18 June and was published by the Parliament today.

This Bill is required as a direct result of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, for which there was no democratic mandate in Scotland. As you are aware, the overwhelming majority of people in Scotland have consistently said they want to be in the EU and, despite Brexit, we are doing everything we can to stay close to our European partners. Therefore, the Bill has two main purposes. Part one, provides for a discretionary power which will enable the Scottish Ministers to align devolved Scots law with EU legislation after the end of the implementation period. In Part two, provisions are made regarding domestic replacement arrangements for EU environmental principles and governance. This will ensure that there continues to be guiding principles on the environment in Scotland at the end of the implementation period. In addition, an environmental governance body, Environmental Standards Scotland, will be established so that we can maintain a system of environmental governance equivalent to that currently provided by the institutions of the European Union.

As you will appreciate, the Bill has become more urgent because of the UK Government's reckless refusal to ask for an extension to the Brexit transition period. Therefore it has been introduced at this time to allow for adequate scrutiny in the Scottish Parliament.

I attach a link to the Bill below:

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/uk-withdrawal-from-the-european-union-continuity-scotland-bill-2020>

**MICHAEL RUSSELL**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

