

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 7:37 AM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill Evidence Session - 25th October

Good Morning [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Andrew Voas and myself will attend to support the Minister. A briefing is currently being worked on for this appearance at the RAI committee.

Kind Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 4:40 PM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RAI Committee - Welfare of Dogs - Briefing Pack - 25 October 23

P/O Minister for Energy and the Environment

I enclose a briefing back for the RAIC evidence session on 25 October – SGLD, PCO and SpADs have contributed to this.

We look forward to discussing this further at a pre-meeting on 24 October.

Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

ATTACHMENT –

RAI COMMITTEE – WELFARE OF DOGS – DRAFT BRIEFING PACK 25 OCTOBER 23

[Redacted] section 30(b) - free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2023 5:31 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: RAI Committee - Welfare of Dogs - Briefing Pack - 25 October 23

Good Evening [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Thanks for this.

Can you please separate out the opening statement? Speaking notes should always be separate to the briefing.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

All emails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Office do not keep official records of such emails or attachments.

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; @gov.scot>

Sent: Friday, October 20, 2023 9:12 AM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; @gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: RAI Committee - Welfare of Dogs - Briefing Pack - 25 October 23

Good morning [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>;

Please see attached Speaking Note and separate Briefing per your email. Please let me know if you need anything else.

Best wishes

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>;

ATTACHMENT –

RAI COMMITTEE – WELFARE OF DOGS – DRAFT BRIEFING PACK 25 OCTOBER 23

RAI COMMITTEE – WELFARE OF DOGS –25 OCTOBER 23 SPEAKING NOTE

[Redacted] section 30(b) - free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Sent: Friday, October 20, 2023 10:40 AM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: RAI Committee - Welfare of Dogs - Briefing Pack - 25 October 23

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

Thanks for this. I've updated the Speaking Note and now attach both updated Note with the draft Briefing for ease of reference.

Best wishes

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

ATTACHMENT –

RAI COMMITTEE – WELFARE OF DOGS – DRAFT BRIEFING PACK 25 OCTOBER 23

RAI COMMITTEE – WELFARE OF DOGS –25 OCTOBER 23 SPEAKING NOTE

[Redacted] section 30(b) - free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2023 8:28 PM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: IMMEDIATE: Welfare of Dogs Bill - supplementary Q&A

P/O Minister for Energy and Environment

As requested I enclose a further note on a couple of points for the Minister's appearance at the RAIC evidence session tomorrow.

Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

**ATTACHMENT –
WELFARE OF DOGS – SUPPLEMENTARY Q&A**

[Redacted] section 30(b) - free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 5:45 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands <CabSecRALRI@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Letter from the RAIC Convener regarding the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Please see letter we received from Committee.

I would be grateful if we can have a draft reply by 4pm on Wednesday 1st November.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

All emails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Office do not keep official records of such emails or attachments.

25 October 2023

Dear Minister,

WELFARE OF DOGS (SCOTLAND) BILL

Thank you for giving evidence on the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill at the meeting of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee on 25 October 2023.

During the evidence session, you offered to provide further information in relation to the following –

- The Scottish Government's view on the scope of Part 1 of the Bill being limited to pets, rather than all dogs, and the lack of definition of a pet in the Bill; and
- Recent Scottish Government funding for public awareness campaigns to promote dog-related animal welfare.

The committee would appreciate a response by 10 November 2023.

Your Sincerely

Finlay Carson MSP
Convenor, Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 11:00 AM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> >

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> @gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands <CabSecRALRI@gov.scot>; <[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Letter from the RAIC Convener regarding the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Good Morning [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Please find requested draft reply. This has been checked by SpAds.

Kind Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

XX November 2023

Dear Convener,

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 25 October subsequent to my offer to provide further information on matters raised during the evidence session on the same date.

The Scottish Government's view on the scope of Part 1 of the Bill being limited to pet dogs, rather than all dogs, and the lack of definition of a pet in the Bill.

The Scottish Government's view is that the scope of Part 1 of the Bill should extend to all dogs regardless of the purpose for which they are kept. It agrees with comments raised by the stakeholders in the evidence session that took place on 20 September and the written responses received by the committee that it would not be too onerous to extend the scope to all dogs.

The current Scottish Government code of practice for the welfare of dogs extends to all dogs.

Scottish Government funding for public awareness campaigns to promote dog-related animal welfare.

There is no specific ongoing annual budget for Scottish Government animal welfare awareness campaigns. Previous awareness campaigns have been funded from the overall Agriculture and Rural Economy budget. Decisions on funding such campaigns are informed by need and whether or not there are issues which would benefit from such a campaign. You will recall that between 2018 and 2021, there were a number of issues relating to puppy welfare, not least the increase during the pandemic of families seeking to buy a pet and the importance of encouraging people to do so safely.

In 2018-19 the Scottish Government puppy campaign had a budget of £300 000. £225 000 of this was for 'paid for media' and overall development of the campaign and the remaining £75 000 was to cover insight and evaluation. The *Buy A Puppy Safely* campaign aimed to help people source their new puppy responsibly by informing them of the consequences of illegal puppy farming, arming them with knowledge of the warning signs to look out for and directing them to the "buy a puppy safely" website - [Animal Welfare Site \(buyapuppysafely.org\)](https://www.buyapuppysafely.org).

This campaign achieved strong success in reaching the target audience, and highlights included:

- 86% claimed to understand the risks of sourcing a puppy from a puppy farmer (target: 84%)
- 88% claimed they would make the right checks on puppies if purchasing a new pet (target: 75%)
- Increased awareness (up to 10 percentage points) amongst the target audience of specific risks of buying from a puppy farm
- 60,159 unique visits to the website during the campaign period, with an average dwell time of 14 minutes
- 20% of all calls to the Scottish SPCA Animal Helpline in 2018 were made during the campaign period; an increase of 138% over the previous period.

In 2019-20 the Scottish Government campaign had a budget of £222 000. £200 000 of this was for "paid for media", campaign development with the remaining £22 000 for insight gathering and campaign evaluation. This campaign built on the success of the *Buy A Puppy Safely* 2018-19 campaign.

This campaign also achieved strong success, and highlights included:

- 76% claimed to have seen or heard the campaign (target: 67%).
- 92% were aware of the 2+ signs of an illegally bred puppy highlighted in the campaign (target: 90%).
- 89% of those who've seen or heard the campaign reported to be encouraged to protect themselves from illegal puppy dealers (target: 88%).
- 85% were aware of two or more signs of buying from a puppy farm featured in the campaign (target: 87%).
- 70,000 unique visits to the website during the campaign period with an average dwell time of 7 minutes.
- During the campaign period, calls to the Scottish SPCA hotline were double the levels seen during the 2018 campaign period, and almost double the number in the preceding 8 weeks.

In 2020-21, the Scottish Government provided a grant of £135 000 to the Scottish SPCA which ran a campaign on our behalf. The campaign focussed on highlighting the unlicensed puppy trade, how to avoid buying from unlicensed sellers and key checks that potential puppy buyers should undertake. The decision to deliver a campaign through the Scottish SPCA instead of a Scottish Government led campaign was due to resourcing pressures, as communications about Covid 19 were being prioritised at the time.

Yours Sincerely

GILLIAN MARTIN MSP

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2023 3:31 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands <CabSecRALRI@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Letter from the RAIC Convener regarding the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Thanks for this.

I've now sent the letter and have attached for reference.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

31 October 2023

Dear Convener,

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 25 October subsequent to my offer to provide further information on matters raised during the evidence session on the same date.

The Scottish Government's view on the scope of Part 1 of the Bill being limited to pet dogs, rather than all dogs, and the lack of definition of a pet in the Bill.

The Scottish Government's view is that the scope of Part 1 of the Bill should extend to all dogs regardless of the purpose for which they are kept. It agrees with comments raised by the stakeholders in the evidence session that took place on 20 September and the written responses received by the committee that it would not be too onerous to extend the scope to all dogs.

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Yours Sincerely

GILLIAN MARTIN MSP

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 3:33 PM
To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>
Subject: ERDM Link Note of Meeting - Welfare of Dogs - Christine Grahame MSP

Good Afternoon,

Please find ERDM link [Redacted] Section 30(b) - free and frank provision of advice or exchange of views

Kind Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2023 2:18 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill - correspondence from Christine Grahame MSP

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

I'd be grateful if we can have a draft reply to Ms Grahame's letter with us by 4pm on Wednesday 22nd November.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

19 December 2023

Dear Minister,

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

I have been reflecting on the evidence you gave to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee on 25 October 2023. I very much welcome the Scottish Government's support for Part 1 of the Bill which would establish a Code of Practice and a certificate. This would be distinct from existing material in numerous ways, including the fact that it is targeted at the cohort of people yet to buy a dog. The certificate would establish a whole new process where prospective owners actively consider whether they can provide all of the key conditions for healthy dog ownership and also consider whether the dog is coming from a reputable source (for example always seeking to see a puppy with its mother).

The potential to improve someone's understanding of the responsibility of owning a dog in advance of purchasing one would be a valuable contribution to the ongoing work you set out in evidence that is seeking to improve dog welfare and to reduce the operation of the illegal puppy farming trade in Scotland. The process of considering questions in the certificate and signing it, which I consider a key element of Part 1, would as you stated in evidence be:

“...a psychological thing. If someone has to sign something in order to get a certificate, to show that they have had to think through some of the aspects of that, that would prompt reflection. I agree with the requirement, as people should very much be doing that already. They are making a commitment of up to about 15 years—they will have a living being in their house, which will require expense and attention and make a massive difference to their everyday life. The requirement for a certificate acts almost as a checklist, and I agree with that.”

Turning to Part 2, I have reflected on your evidence including the number and range of concerns you have in relation to whether the registration system set out in Part 2 is: workable; a proportionate response; affordable at present; and would have sufficient long-term benefits to justify it. I also noted your concerns that there could be cause for confusion for buyers between the register of reputable breeders and the register of unlicensed litters.

You confirmed to the Committee the Government's intention to seek to remove Part 2 of the Bill at Stage 2. The value of the policy set out in Part 2 is traceability and transparency of where an advertised puppy is coming from. Those are the key benefits of Part 2 from my perspective, the ability to trace every dog through for example every advert for a dog requiring to reflect a breeder licence number or an unlicensed litter number, and having one database where a person wishing to acquire a puppy can search for the name of the first owner, registration number and puppy details. I believe this would benefit those seeking to enforce dog welfare measures and aid buyers seeking to ensure the dog they are buying is from a reputable source.

That said, I was very interested in your comments in evidence in relation to microchipping as an alternative approach to achieving these benefits including your statement that “Initially, microchipping was about being able to trace lost pets, whereas now it is more about traceability”. Traceability through microchipping is something I have passionately supported for a long time and appreciate the benefits it could bring.

[The Microchipping of Dogs \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#), established that the 'keeper' of the bitch that gave birth to a puppy must not transfer the puppy until it has been microchipped. The associated details that must be recorded on a microchip database are extensive under the regulations (reproduced in the annexe for ease of reference).

It has long appeared to me to be a logical next step to establish a central database where these details are available to prospective buyers. Notwithstanding the work required to establish a workable system, would the Scottish Government be supportive in principle to developing a means of improving traceability of every puppy that is sold or given away in Scotland, based on the existing legal requirement to microchip every dog in Scotland?

In addition to an indication as to whether the Government would be supportive of such an approach, I would also be very grateful for any details of ongoing work by the Government in this area. For example, would the Government support, and has it explored the potential for, a UK wide system to improve traceability on a UK wide basis which would remove the potential for cross border issues?

If the benefits I associate with Part 2 are intended to be delivered through the existing microchipping system, I would be amenable to supporting this as a viable alternative to progressing with Part 2 of the Bill. I am also hugely committed to protecting the progress of the policy set out in Part 1.

I am copying the Committee into this letter as it is absolutely for the Committee to assess the evidence received on this Bill and base its deliberations at Stage 1 upon that evidence. On that basis I should be grateful if you could also copy your response to the Committee.

I am also going to issue a copy of this letter to all key stakeholders such as animal welfare organisations that have contributed to the policy development behind the Bill including Part 2. I will also issue this letter to all the many stakeholders who have expressed their support for the Bill, including Part 2, in their written and oral evidence to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Christine Grahame MSP
Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal [Information @gov.scot](#)

Sent: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 10:52 AM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill - correspondence from Christine Grahame MSP

Good Morning [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Please find draft reply to Ms Grahame's letter as requested.

This has been checked over by legal colleagues and SpAds.

Kind Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

XX November 2023

Dear Christine,

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 16 November on the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill.

I am glad you welcome the Scottish Government's support for the principle behind Part 1 of the Bill. Improving public understanding of the responsibility of owning a dog in advance of acquiring one would be a valuable contribution in support of other ongoing work to seek to improve dog welfare and reduce the operation of the illegal puppy trade in Scotland.

Establishing a Code of Practice that focusses on the purchase of a dog would raise awareness around what is required when going through the process. The process of completing and retaining a certificate before acquiring a dog would help ensure prospective owners actively consider whether they can provide all of the key conditions for healthy dog ownership and also consider whether the dog is coming from a reputable source. This is why I welcome the principle of Part 1 of the Bill. The Scottish Government will of course carefully consider the views of stakeholders and the recommendations of the Committee about the form that the Code of Practice should take, in particular whether this should be a separate Code of Practice focusing specifically on the act of acquiring or supplying a dog, or whether the Scottish Government's existing Code of Practice for the welfare of dogs should be revised to incorporate these points.

I am also pleased you have reflected on the potential issues around the registration system proposed in Part 2. The Scottish Government does have concerns about whether a registration system would be a workable and proportionate response to the issues this Bill seeks to address. A further, legitimate concern would be the cost of establishing and maintaining a registration system at this present time and what tangible long-term benefits it would result in to justify this cost. Perhaps our biggest concern in this regard would be the affordability of registration for people during a cost of living crisis.

Previous work carried out by Scottish Government officials highlighted that there could be confusion for buyers between the licensing of reputable breeders and the register of unlicensed litters and I feel the proposed registration system could unintentionally legitimise less than reputable breeders.

The Scottish Government believes the traceability and transparency benefits that you feel Part 2 of the Bill could bring could instead be achieved by reviewing and updating our current microchipping legislation.

As you are aware [The Microchipping of Dogs \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#) are made under existing powers contained in the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and would not require primary legislation to be amended. In 2022 the UK Government consulted on possible reforms to the equivalent microchipping legislation in England, including establishing a single point of access to all microchipping data and permanent recording of a dog breeder's details on the database.

Scottish Government officials were involved in discussions about these proposals at the time, as a consistent GB or UK approach to updating microchip database requirements would ensure the most effective traceability as dogs, as you know, can be, and are, moved freely within the UK.

It is not clear if current UK Ministers still wish to take forward these proposed reforms, but the Scottish Government strongly supports these in principle and will be pressing for further joint work in this area with current and future UK administrations.

I hope this helps clarify the Scottish Government position on these points. This letter will also be copied to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee as you have requested, to assist in the Committee's consideration of these issues at Stage 1 of your Bill.

Yours sincerely

GILLIAN MARTIN MSP

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 1:13 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information @gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill - correspondence from Christine Grahame MSP

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Thanks for this.

Ms Martin is content with the letter however it is not on our letter template.

I would be grateful if you could update it and send it back and I will get it issued.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal [Information @gov.scot](#)

Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 1:47 PM

To: Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill - correspondence from Christine Grahame MSP

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Please find letter on the correct letter template.

Kind Regards

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

XX November 2023

Dear Christine,

Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Thank you for your letter of 16 November on the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill.

I am glad you welcome the Scottish Government's support for the principle behind Part 1 of the Bill. Improving public understanding of the responsibility of owning a dog in advance of acquiring one would be a valuable contribution in support of other ongoing work to seek to improve dog welfare and reduce the operation of the illegal puppy trade in Scotland.

Establishing a Code of Practice that focusses on the purchase of a dog would raise awareness around what is required when going through the process. The process of completing and retaining a certificate before acquiring a dog would help ensure prospective owners actively consider whether they can provide all of the key conditions for healthy dog ownership and also consider whether the dog is coming from a reputable source. This is why I welcome the principle of Part 1 of the Bill. The Scottish Government will of course carefully consider the views of stakeholders and the recommendations of the Committee about the form that the Code of Practice should take, in particular whether this should be a separate Code of Practice focusing specifically on the act of acquiring or supplying a dog, or whether the Scottish Government's existing Code of Practice for the welfare of dogs should be revised to incorporate these points.

I am also pleased you have reflected on the potential issues around the registration system proposed in Part 2. The Scottish Government does have concerns about whether a registration system would be a workable and proportionate response to the issues this Bill seeks to address. A further, legitimate concern would be the cost of establishing and maintaining a registration system at this present time and what tangible long-term benefits it would result in to justify this cost. Perhaps our biggest concern in this regard would be the affordability of registration for people during a cost of living crisis.

Previous work carried out by Scottish Government officials highlighted that there could be confusion for buyers between the licensing of reputable breeders and the register of unlicensed litters and I feel the proposed registration system could unintentionally legitimise less than reputable breeders.

The Scottish Government believes the traceability and transparency benefits that you feel Part 2 of the Bill could bring could instead be achieved by reviewing and updating our current microchipping legislation.

As you are aware [The Microchipping of Dogs \(Scotland\) Regulations 2016](#) are made under existing powers contained in the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and would not require primary legislation to be amended. In 2022 the UK Government consulted on possible reforms to the equivalent microchipping legislation in England, including establishing a single point of access to all microchipping data and permanent recording of a dog breeder's details on the database. Scottish Government officials were involved in discussions about these proposals at the time, as a

consistent GB or UK approach to updating microchip database requirements would ensure the most effective traceability as dogs, as you know, can be, and are, moved freely within the UK.

It is not clear if current UK Ministers still wish to take forward these proposed reforms, but the Scottish Government strongly supports these in principle and will be pressing for further joint work in this area with current and future UK administrations.

I hope this helps clarify the Scottish Government position on these points. This letter will also be copied to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee as you have requested, to assist in the Committee's consideration of these issues at Stage 1 of your Bill.

Yours sincerely

GILLIAN MARTIN MSP

From: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Minister for Energy and the Environment

Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 1:52 PM

To: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>; Minister for Energy and the Environment <MinisterEE@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>; [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill - correspondence from Christine Grahame MSP

Good Afternoon [Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information,

Thanks for this.

I have now sent the letter and have attached for reference.

[Redacted] - Section 38 (1)(b) - Personal Information

23 November 2023

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Thank you for your letter of 16 November on the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Bill.

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GILLIAN MARTIN MSP