



PACAC (Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee)

House of Commons · London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

26th April 2022

Dear Michael,

Correspondence regarding the Elections Bill

Thank you for providing a response to my letter of 12 April and providing answers to some of the issues raised (state of electoral law, post-legislative scrutiny, Strategy and Policy Statement for the Electoral Commission). The letter however does not provide an answer or the associated information and data relating to the Government's assessment that the introduction of a voter ID requirement is 'proportionate' to fulfilling the Government's stated aim of making elections more secure, compared with the risk of disenfranchisement. In our report on the Bill, we set out the following recommendation:


The Government has said the measures in the Bill are proportionate. Given the potential for a significant number of people not to vote as a consequence of the voter ID requirement, the Government should not proceed with its proposals for the introduction of ID for voting until at least it has set out the criteria that were used in this proportionality assessment and explained the weight given to each criteria in the assessment.

The Government failed to provide this information or address this recommendation in its response to our report. We subsequently raised this issue with you when you appeared before the Committee on 1st March, at which you committed to "provide all the data required in order to show why it is that we have made this judgment". Your department failed to provide this data. I then wrote to you again on 12th April, asking again for the Government to provide the criteria it used in the proportionality assessment. Your response to this letter did not provide this information, and in fact failed to acknowledge or respond to this repeated request.

A Select Committee of the House of Commons should not have to make repeated requests for information that should legitimately be available in the public arena, particularly given the significant impact of this policy on the functioning of our democracy. Furthermore, it is unacceptable for a Minister to commit to providing information to a Select Committee and to subsequently refuse to do. Such actions are tantamount to showing contempt for this Committee, as well as both Houses of Parliament who have considered this Bill based on the Government's assertion that the measure is evidenced and proportionate.

This letter is being copied to the Chair of the Liaison Committee, Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, and a copy of this letter, and your response, will be placed in the public domain.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Wragg', written in a cursive style.

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee