



Equality Hub

Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP
Minister for Women and Equalities
Secretary of State for Trade
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Catherine McKinnell MP
Chair of the Petitions Committee
House of Commons
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26 January 2023

Dear Catherine,

I am writing to respond to your letter regarding our delayed response to e-petition 623243, entitled "Update the Equality Act to make clear the characteristic "sex" is biological sex".

I recognise that Government responses to e-petitions, which have been agreed between the Petitions Committee and Leader of the House, should be provided within 14 days and no later than 21 days. Since the response to this petition was first requested on 3 November, the Government response has been delayed. I apologise for this. I also recognise that petitioners are entitled to a response from the Government when their petition receives over 10,000 signatures and this should normally be provided in a timely manner.

The delay was caused by exceptional factors including waiting for the conclusion of a directly relevant case being heard by the Court of Appeal in Scotland on this issue. We took the view that it would be helpful to the petitioners if we could respond in full knowledge of the Court's ruling on this matter.

Now that the Court has made its ruling and with apologies for the delay, I now attach the Government's response to this petition to accompany this letter.

Thank you for your patience.

RT HON KEMI BADENOCH MP

Minister for Women and Equalities, Secretary of State for Trade and President for the Board of Trade

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