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Lord Gardiner of Kimble
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Andrew Jones MP
Chair, European Statutory Instruments Committee
House of Commons
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18 December 2020

Dear Andrew

The Animals, Aquatic Animal Health, Invasive Alien Species, Plant Propagating Material and Seeds (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020

Thank you for your letter of the 26 November, confirming the committee's recommendation that the above instrument be subject to the negative procedure and for your observations in relation to portmanteau instruments, which raises important matters.

I am grateful to Members of both Houses for their work in scrutinising the department's 2020 secondary legislation programme, which has been the largest across Government, and I recognise the essential role your committee plays in this. The work of the legislature is essential to making good legislation and I would like to reassure you and the committee that Defra is committed to upholding high standards of legislative practice and to making good law that is both clear and accessible and which assists parliamentarians in scrutinising the legislation that comes before it. The current pandemic and leaving the European Union has meant that some government legislation has had to be delivered swiftly. I acknowledge that these are exceptional times and they do not necessarily provide a model example of how legislation should be brought forward.

I will take account the points you raise and will communicate to officials the importance of minimising the combination of large numbers of disparate amendments in a single instrument.

*Your ever,
John*