

European Scrutiny Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

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From: Sir William Cash CH MP

1 May 2024

Rt Hon Lord David Cameron
Foreign Secretary
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
King Charles Street
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Dear David

I write regarding a worrying trend that we have identified with the late provision of Explanatory Memoranda (EMs) on deposited EU documents. As examples, the EM on COM(2023)770 (DEFRA lead) is three months late, that on COM(2023)769 (DEFRA lead) is almost two months late and that on COM(24)43 (DHSC) is six weeks late. In the preceding six months we have seen Departments repeatedly miss EM deadlines.

On a separate but linked note, we are aware of recent Cabinet Office delays in notifying the Northern Ireland Assembly Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee (the 'DSC') of replacement EU acts listed under the Windsor Framework. Late notification can prevent the DSC from opening an inquiry into a replacement act and (potentially) MLAs missing the deadline for submitting a written notification seeking to prevent the application of that EU law in Northern Ireland.

I know that you take parliamentary scrutiny seriously and ask that you speak to your Departmental colleagues about the importance of providing information on EU documents in a timely manner.

I am copying this letter to Les Saunders, EU Document Scrutiny Manager, in your Department.

With every best wish

CHAIR