

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JH-/00928/22

Catherine Fookes
Director
Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales

Catherine@wenwales.org.uk

05 July 2022

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for your letter of 28 June regarding the revocation of Roe vs Wade in the U.S.

I fully endorse the statement made by the First Minister on 24 June. This is a heart-breaking and dangerous verdict for the basic human rights of women across the US. A women's right to choose is not a political tool. Progress is never inevitable; we must all stand together to support the rights of women everywhere.

Welsh Government considers safe abortion to be an intrinsic part of healthcare. You may be aware that the temporary arrangements introduced by Welsh Government during the covid pandemic allowing a woman to take both abortion pills at home, rather than in a clinic were put on a permanent footing recently. This helps reduce waiting times and allows for earlier and safer treatment for women accessing the service.

The Welsh Government Programme for Government includes a commitment to making Wales the safest place in Europe to be a woman. This must include access to clinical services. Health officials recently asked the NHS and BPAS whether there were any current issues with harassment outside abortion clinics in Wales. Whilst there had been some historic issues, these did not appear to still be an issue and no particular concerns were raised.

In terms of using legislative powers in relation to public order issues, this is a matter for the UK Government. However, legal abortion is a healthcare entitlement in Wales and a woman's right to choose must be respected, free from harassment, victimisation or discrimination.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I will also write to the Northern Ireland Secretary in support of the urgent implementation of an abortion service in Northern Ireland and to ask what progress has been made since his statement of 19 May promising swift action.

Thank you for your efforts in support of women's healthcare and reproductive rights. Together we can make a positive difference for the people of Wales and set an example to countries where progress has stalled or even worse, been reversed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line above the first few letters.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

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