

**PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU**

**REFERRAL OF DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR THE RIGHT TO FOOD  
(SCOTLAND) BILL**

1. A draft proposal for a Right to Food (Scotland) Bill was lodged on 2 September 2021 by Rhoda Grant MSP. The proposal is for a bill to incorporate the human right to food into Scots law.
2. The proposal is based on an identical proposal made in Session 5 by Elaine Smith MSP. That proposal earned the right to introduce a bill but ran out of time for a bill to be introduced before the end of the session.
3. Rhoda Grant's draft proposal was accompanied by a statement of reasons setting out why the member considered that further consultation was not necessary.
4. Under Standing Orders Rule 9.14.5, the Parliamentary Bureau referred the draft proposal to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 7 September 2021.
5. The Committee considered the statement of reasons on 5 October 2021 and determined that it was not satisfied with the reasons given by the member for not consulting on a draft proposal.
6. Under Standing Order Rule 9.14.7, when a committee decides that it is not satisfied with the reasons given by the member for not consulting, the proposal falls unless the member, within 2 months, lodges with the Clerk a consultation document.
7. Rule 9.14.7 also states that the Parliamentary Bureau shall refer the draft proposal to a committee or committees within whose remit the subject matter of the draft proposal falls. The referral would be for information only.
8. The member lodged a consultation document on 24 November 2021. The consultation opened on 25 November 2021 and will close on 16 February 2022. The Bureau is therefore invited to consider which committee to refer the draft proposal (in this instance, accompanied by a consultation document) to.
9. The proposal falls within the remits of the following committees

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Remit and relevance</b>
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice	The Committee's remit is to consider and report on the following (and any additional matter added under Rule 6.1.5A)—

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• matters relating to equal opportunities and upon the observance of equal opportunities within the Parliament</li><li>• human rights, including Convention rights (within the meaning of section 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998) and other human rights contained in any international convention, treaty or other international instrument ratified by the United Kingdom</li><li>• matters relating to civil justice within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans</li></ul> <p>The right to adequate food is included in article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all of which the United Kingdom has ratified. It therefore is apparent that a proposed bill concerning the human right to food falls within the committee's remit.</p>
<p>Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment</p>	<p>The Committee's remit is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands.</p> <p>The Cabinet Secretary's responsibilities include the food and drink supply chain, and the Scottish Food Agency. The Cabinet Secretary also has responsibility for agriculture, including food production.</p> <p>As the proposed bill is concerned specifically with food, it falls within the Committee's remit.</p>

<p>Social Justice and Social Security</p>	<p>The Committee's remit is to consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, excluding matters relating to local government, housing and planning.</p> <p>The Cabinet Secretary's responsibilities include tackling inequalities, poverty action measures, human rights, child poverty and equalities. The remit of the committee is therefore engaged by the proposed bill's focus on the human right to food and by its aim of reducing food inequality and insecurity.</p>
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10. The proposal engages the remits of the three committees mentioned above. Given the Bureau previously determined that the draft proposal and statement of reasons should be referred to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, it may wish to refer that committee again, for information only.

**Recommendation**

11. The Bureau is invited to refer the draft proposal on the Right to Food (Scotland) Bill to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee.

**Non-Government Bills Unit  
November 2021**