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**LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL PRIVATE SECRETARY, FIRST MINISTER
REQUESTING CONSENT OF HER MAJESTY**

To: The Private Secretary to Her Majesty

Dear Sir/Madam

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (WALES) BILL

Please find enclosed two copies of the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill, for which the Consent of Her Majesty is sought.

Statutory background

Section 111(4) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 states:

“The standing orders must include provision for securing that the Assembly may only pass a Bill containing provisions which would, if contained in a Bill for an Act of Parliament, require the consent of Her Majesty or the Duke of Cornwall if such consent has been signified in standing orders.”

Standing Order 26.67 of the National Assembly for Wales further states:

“If a Bill contains any provision, or is amended so as to include any provision, that would, if contained in a Bill for an Act of the United Kingdom Parliament, require the consent of Her Majesty, or the Duke of Cornwall, the Assembly must not debate the question whether the Bill be passed (or approved following Reconsideration) unless such consent to such a provision has been signified by a member of the government during proceedings on the Bill at a meeting of the Assembly.”

Purpose of the Bill

The key aims of the Bill are:

- To preserve (from October 2013) the pre existing level of statutory protection enjoyed by agricultural workers in Wales in respect of wage rates and other terms and conditions of employment, that (without this Bill) would cease to exist once the Agricultural Wages Board for England and Wales is abolished on 25 June 2013 and the Agricultural Wages (England and Wales) Order 2012 is revoked from 1 October 2013. In this regard, the Bill preserves the effect of the 2012 Order in Wales;

- To provide the Welsh Ministers with the power to set up an Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales that can be tasked with providing the Welsh Ministers with advice on agricultural wages and other terms of employment as well as undertaking other functions in relation to the agricultural sector in Wales;
- To provide the Welsh Ministers with Order making powers pursuant to which the Ministers may make future Agricultural Wages Orders setting out rates of pay and other conditions for relevant workers. (When any such order is made the rates and the terms and conditions set out in the 2012 wages order will cease to have effect in Wales;
- To provide the mechanisms whereby the enforcement regime, within the National Minimum Wage Act 1998, will (with certain necessary modifications) continue to apply to the agricultural wages regime established by this Act; and
- To enable the Welsh Ministers to appoint enforcement officers to act in Wales.

How the Bill could affect the Crown

The Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill is capable of applying to the private interests of the Queen and in so far as Her Majesty employs agricultural workers in Wales.

Consent

The Government intends to introduce this Bill as a Government Emergency Bill, and for this reason I respectfully ask the Queen for consent, in so far as she may be affected by the Bill by 12 July 2013.

Thank you for considering this request and please let us know if we can be of any further assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Des Clifford
Principal Private Secretary, First Minister

Enc: Two copies of the Bill

CC:

The Secretary to the Crown Estate Commissioners, 16 New Burlington Place, London, W1S 2HX

Julian Smith, Messrs Farrer and Co., 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3LH