



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Wales Bill: referendum franchise**

DATE **28 November 2014**

BY **Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Finance and Government Business**

This written statement is laid under Standing Order 30: “Notification in relation to UK Parliament Bills”. It relates to provision in the Wales Bill (the Bill), made by amendment, which modifies Welsh Ministers’ functions, but which does not require a Legislative Consent Motion under Standing Order 29.

The UK Government’s expressed policy objectives for the Bill are to make the National Assembly for Wales (“the Assembly”) and the Welsh Government more accountable to the people of Wales for raising the money they spend, and to improve the system of elections to the Assembly.

The relevant amendment is amendment number 1 in the “Marshallled List of Amendments to be moved on Third Reading” found on the Parliament website via the link below.
[Lords Amendments: Wales Bill \(21st November 2014\)](#)

Clause 13 of the Wales Bill provides the mechanism through which the Assembly can trigger a referendum on whether there should be a Welsh rate of income tax. The First Minister or a Welsh Minister may move a resolution in the Assembly that a recommendation should be made to Her Majesty to make an Order to hold a referendum.

On 24 November at Third Reading in the House of Lords, an amendment was agreed to clause 13 of the Bill which requires that any such resolution moved must state whether the voting age at the proposed referendum is to be 16 or 18. Consequential amendments were also made to Schedule 1. Therefore the First Minister or Welsh Ministers would, as a new statutory requirement under the Wales Bill, be required to propose the franchise for any income tax referendum, for the Assembly’s consideration.

The Welsh Government considers it appropriate for these provisions to be made, and to be made by means of the Wales Bill, because the provisions could not be made by an Assembly Act.