



Deputy Lyndon Farnham
Chief Minister

BY EMAIL

5th September 2025

Scrutiny of Legislation and Timeline for Major Debates in 2025

Dear Chief Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 26th August 2025 regarding the scheduling of debates for two significant items of business for the States Assembly: the 2026 Government Budget and the draft Assisted Dying Law. Having discussed the matter at a recent Scrutiny Liaison Committee meeting, whilst we understand and accept the proposed timeframe regarding the budget, the proposed scheduling of the debate on Assisted Dying in November appears more problematic.

The Chair of the Assisted Dying Review Panel has been engaged in dialogue with the Minister for Health and Social Services about the timing of the Assisted Dying debate, and we would very much welcome that this dialogue is continued with a view to ensuring that the matter receives the duly rigorous Scrutiny phase that such a sensitive, complex and impactful topic requires. By way of just one example, with the proposition only recently lodged the engagement of much needed expert advisors, and their ability to produce robust output with due time for it to be considered by all parties, stands to be severely compromised by the current timetable. We will however be in contact with our advisors regarding the timeline, and will continue dialogue to confirm the date of the debate in due course. In addition, adequate time must be factored in for the preparation and consideration of any amendments (not limited to the Panel) arising from the Panel's work.

We would also remind you of the letter sent to you on 3rd June from the Committee regarding the Assembly's well established legislative process. We highlighted two examples of then ongoing dialogue between Panels and Ministers, relating to Assisted Dying and Residential Tenancy legislation, that had caused the Scrutiny Liaison Committee to reflect that it would be helpful to remind Ministers of Standing Order 72, the most pertinent parts of which remain relevant to this situation and read:

72 Referral of draft Law or Regulations for scrutiny

(1) If the States agree to the principles of a draft Law or draft Regulations, the draft shall be referred to the relevant scrutiny panel or relevant review panel if the chair of that panel has previously informed the States or confirms, when asked by the presiding officer, that he or she wishes to have the draft referred to the panel.

(2) If the chair of the relevant scrutiny panel or relevant review panel informs the States that he or she does not wish to have the draft referred to the panel, any member of the States may propose, without notice, that the States request the panel to reconsider the decision.

(3) If the States agree to the proposal –

(a) the 2nd reading of the draft shall not continue at the meeting; and

(b) the presiding officer shall, at the next meeting, ask the chair of the relevant scrutiny panel or relevant review panel whether, the panel having reconsidered the matter, he or she wishes to have the draft referred to the panel.

(4) A draft shall not be referred to the relevant scrutiny panel or relevant review panel if it has previously been referred to that panel.

(5) When a draft is referred to the relevant scrutiny panel or relevant review panel or has been so referred previously, but the panel has not reported on it, the States must decide at which meeting the 2nd reading of the draft shall be listed to continue.

(6) The meeting must not be later than the 4th meeting following the debate upon the principles, disregarding any additional meeting day.

We are hopeful that ongoing, constructive dialogue with the Minister to identify a mutually agreeable debate date will avoid this Standing Order being invoked. We have asked our officers to liaise with the officers within Health and Social Services to arrange a follow up meeting with the Minister and look forward to this taking place.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Inna Gardiner
President, Scrutiny Liaison Committee



Deputy Louise Doublet
Chair, Assisted Dying Review Panel

cc Deputy Tom Binet, Minister for Health and Social Services