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Stuart McMillan, MSP
Convener
Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

By email to:
DPLR.Committee@parliament.scot

10 September 2025

Dear Convener,

Leases (Automatic Continuation etc.) (Scotland) Bill

I would like to thank the Committee for its work in scrutinising the Leases (Automatic Continuation etc.) (Scotland) Bill and for its Stage 1 Report. While many stakeholders welcomed the Bill, a minority questioned the need for it and the scope of the reform proposed. This is reflected in the evidence the Committee heard at Stage 1 where the S1 report states “the Committee highlights to the Scottish Government the wide range of concerns – some fundamental – raised by some stakeholders during the course of the Committee’s scrutiny of the Bill” and as a consequence, the Committee did not make a recommendation on the General Principles in its report.

Our meeting last week to discuss the bill was very useful and I thank you all for the frank discussion. While Scottish Law Commission Bills have, in the past, generally proceeded on the basis of a clear consensus over the question of whether the law should be reformed, it is clear to me that, regrettably, there is no such consensus among Committee Members on this Bill and it appears unlikely that such consensus will be reached during the amending stages if the Bill were to proceed and changes to the Bill has the potential to make it markedly different from what the SLC envisaged. Accordingly, I have taken the decision to withdraw the Bill at this stage. This is not a reflection at all on the excellent work undertaken by the Commission, of which I know we are all very appreciative.

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I realise that there is a shared view among a wide range of stakeholders that the law does need to be reformed. I therefore intend to reflect on the Bill with a view to considering any appropriate options for progressing this work, with any decision on the future legislative programme for the next Government.

I have copied this letter to the Scottish Law Commission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siobhian Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Siobhian Brown

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