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Dear Peter,

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP BILL—COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS TO THE EXPLANATORY AND FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Thank you for forwarding the Explanatory and Financial Memorandum to the Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill with the Committee's suggested amendments highlighted.

The Minister has considered the changes proposed and is content to approve them. It remains his view that the current process, whereby religious and belief groups seeking to perform marriage ceremonies are assessed by the General Register Office, will maintain the dignity and solemnity of marriage. Nonetheless, the Minister retains the power to introduce additional assessment criteria should there be evidence that these are needed once the Bill has been enacted.

Yours sincerely,

GERARD WILLIS
DEPARTMENTAL ASSEMBLY LIAISON OFFICER