

23rd March 2023

To:

Satwat Rehman, Chief Executive of One Parent Families Scotland
SallyAnn Kelly, Chief Executive of Aberlour
Martin Crewe, Director of Barnardo's Scotland
Mary Glasgow, Chief Executive of Children 1st
Anna Ritchie Allan, Executive Director of Close the Gap
Professor Nancy Loucks, Chief Executive of Families Outside
Martin Dorchester, CEO of Includem
Margaret Gibb, Interim CEO of Parenting Across Scotland
Lesley Kelly, Trustee of Parenting Across Scotland
Dr Marsha Scott, Chief Executive of Scottish Women's Aid
Juliet Harris, Director of Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

Re: Respecting Family Diversity

Hello,

Many thanks for your letter regarding the rights of the child and the equality of all families in all its diverse forms.

We have moved a long way from the nuclear family structure that only sought to marginalise other families. I am thankful our family structure is diverse, and our society now embraces different family structures. I do think we need to go further, however.

Please let me be clear regarding your concerns. All families are valid, valued, and respected. Our aim to build a wellbeing society starts with our children, with each child and their family valued – and definitely celebrated – as part of the diverse, equal and socially just Scotland we want to build.

Please be re-assured of two things then, should I become First Minister. Firstly, I will work tirelessly to embed equality for all children into our society and education, and that will start with valuing family diversity. Our children must learn and understand that all are valued, and all differences are celebrated. I understand marginalisation, and I have said repeatedly that my struggles for equality are connected with all other struggles for equality. Each and every child will be cherished for who they are and who their families are.

Secondly, I am proud that our SNP government pushed forward the UN Rights of the Child (Scotland) Act. This is a vital and world leading piece of legislation that protected children and ensured their same rights as all other citizens in society. That the UK government

blocked the bill after the unequivocal support in the Scottish parliament was an affront to our democracy and our children.

I would like to re-assure you that, I pledge my unequivocal support in advancing people's rights if I become First Minister. And that will always include children's rights. I intend to bring forward the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill, incorporating UN Human Rights Treaties on economic, social and cultural rights, discrimination against women, racial discrimination and on the rights of people with disabilities into Scots Law as far as possible within devolved competencies, and confirming that an independent Scotland would incorporate them in full.

If elected as First Minister, then, I would also look forward to discussing these issues with you and bringing to fruition a genuinely innovative and world leading legislation for children's equality and protection.

With best wishes

Humza Yousaf