

Parliamentary Bureau – Referral of Bill at Stage 1

Scottish Parliament (Recall and Removal of Members) Bill

Introduction

1. The Scottish Parliament (Recall and Removal of Members) Bill was introduced in the Parliament on 17 December 2024 by Graham Simpson MSP.
2. The Bill introduces new processes for removing MSPs from office. The Bill provides that an MSP could be recalled if they receive a sanction excluding them from the Parliament for a certain period of time, or if they receive a prison sentence of less than 6 months. The Bill also provides that an MSP would be disqualified from continuing to hold office if they receive a prison sentence of 6 months to 1 year, or if they do not attend Parliament in person for 6 months and do not have a good reason for their non-attendance.
3. The Bill requires Standing Orders to provide for a process by which an MSP can be disqualified for non-attendance. Under this process, a committee must report on whether the member has failed to meet the minimum level of physical attendance expected without a reasonable excuse. If so, the Parliament must vote on whether the member should be disqualified.

Discussion

4. The remit of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee includes to consider and report on the practice and procedures of the Parliament, and on matters relating to the conduct of members in carrying out their Parliamentary duties. The Bill makes provision for MSPs to be removed from office if certain conditions relating to their conduct are met. It also requires certain Parliamentary procedures to be put in place. The remit of the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee is therefore engaged.
5. No other committee remit appears to be engaged.

Recommendation

6. The Bureau is invited to refer the Scottish Parliament (Recall and Removal of Members) Bill to the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee under Rule 9.6.1 for consideration at Stage 1.

Parliamentary Business Team
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