Written Ministerial Statement

Wales Bill

Secretary of State for Wales (David Jones): The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Danny Alexander) and I have today published the Wales Bill and the accompanying Command Paper, *Wales Bill: Financial Empowerment and Accountability.*

The Wales Bill will provide the Welsh Government and the National Assembly for Wales with more levers and incentives to deliver greater economic growth in Wales. The Bill will make the Welsh Government more accountable to the people of Wales, as it will be responsible not only for the money it spends but also, for the first time, how it raises some of that money. The Bill will also provide the Welsh Government with the mechanism to borrow in order to fund improvements in Wales's infrastructure and reforms the Assembly's electoral arrangements to make them fairer and more equitable.

Alongside the Bill the Command Paper, *Wales Bill: Financial Empowerment and Accountability* explains the effects of the Finance elements in Part 2 of the Bill in more detail and sets out further actions that the Government is taking, following the recommendations of the Silk Commission's Part I report, that do not require legislation. A Welsh language version will be available at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/wales-office

I have also written to my Hon Friend the Member for Monmouth (David TC Davies), Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee, enclosing a Memorandum responding to the Committee's Report on its Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the Draft Wales Bill. The Government has accepted most of the Committee's recommendations, and I wish to place on record my thanks to the Committee for their timely and thorough scrutiny of the draft Bill. For the convenience of the House, and with the Committee's permission, I have placed a copy of the Memorandum in the Libraries of both Houses.