***Email to send to your MS:***

Dear ….

**Please SUPPORT NNDM7478 - Members' Legislative Proposal by Mark Isherwood, MS for North Wales, for a British Sign Language (BSL) Bill for Wales.**

I am writing to you as my MS to ask you for your support.

There will be a Members’ Proposal this WEDNESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2021 by Mark Isherwood, MS for North Wales, for a British Sign Language (BSL) Bill for Wales.

Mark Isherwood’s Debate will propose that the Senedd:

1. Notes a proposal for a Bill that would make provision to encourage the use of British Sign Language (BSL) in Wales, and improve access to education and services in BSL.

2. Notes that the purpose of the Bill would be to:

a) ensure that the Deaf community and people with hearing loss have a voice in the design and delivery of services to ensure they meet the needs of service users;

b) establish a BSL national advisory group to empower the BSL community in Wales;

c) require the Welsh Government to co-produce and publish a national BSL plan, and to establish strategic goals to improve the accessibility of public services, support services and enhance BSL skills across society.

d) require public bodies to co-produce and publish their own BSL plan to develop BSL awareness and training, and improve access to frontline services.

This is very exciting news and support for it would lead to a BSL (Wales) Act similar to the successful BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. The Labour Party, Plaid Cymru and Liberal Democrats have already committed to supporting a BSL Act in their General Election manifestos. Whatever your political views, your support for this Proposal is vital.

It’s a very important time for Wales and the Welsh Deaf Community, and, a long-overdue step towards equality, recognition of our language and rights similar to those of the Welsh Language Act of 1993.

Please confirm you will support the Proposal.

If you wish to know more about the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, our ongoing work with its National and Local Plans, and, other BSL campaigning work for an Act in Northern Ireland, please do not hesitate to contact David Buxton at the British Deaf Association (BDA).  David oversees the BDA’s BSL Act campaign work and can be reached by email at: davidbuxtontrustee@bda.org.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.  Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

*Your name*

*Your address and post code*