

3rd March 2025

Dear Sir Chris

I am the CEO of a human-rights charity that has been working to raise the alarm about a critical problem in the national **digital identity verification framework** which is being developed.

As you know, the Commons Committee Stage of the Data (Use and Access) Bill begins tomorrow. The Bill Committee is an important opportunity to scrutinise the legislation.

Please take 10 minutes to read this report before this session.

The introduction of a framework for trusted digital identities has the potential to deliver significant benefits for citizens and the economy, making it easier for people to prove who they are and facts about themselves, while protecting their privacy.

Getting this right could create huge benefits. **But to be trustworthy the system must provide accurate information. This includes information on whether someone is male or female when this is needed.** Public bodies such as HM Passport Office and the DVLA have mixed up "sex" and "gender identity" for years. Carrying this muddle over into digital data would lead to medical errors, safeguarding risks and conflicts over single-sex spaces. This would harm everyone, but especially women and transgender people. Fixing the issue in the primary legislation would be the most straightforward way to ensure that data accuracy and privacy are secured.

You will see that the foreword is written by Lord Arbuthnot of Edrom. He helped to introduce three safeguards to the Bill in the House of Lords, which the government is now seeking to remove.

He says that he fears that the history of the Post Office scandal is repeating itself, with flaws in the design of another government IT project being overlooked. Unless the government heeds these warnings, the country is on course for another major public-sector IT failure.

We hope that as a Bill committee member you will scrutinise this issue and ask the Government how it plans to secure the integrity of sex data to protect everyone's rights. Please contact my colleague [REDACTED], if you would like any further information or support.

Yours sincerely



Maya Forstater
CEO

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Redaction Summary

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Exemptions/exceptions:

- S.40 - Personal Information