

Vote on EU Withdrawal Bill – Clause 11 amendment rejected



The vote at Westminster this evening on the EU Withdrawal Bill has not pleased The Scottish Government who regard it as a power grab by the UK Government. The SNP have claimed that there is a total of 111 powers which could be removed from Holyrood's remit unless the proposed amendment to it was allowed.

Scottish Conservative MPs observed the government whip voting against Labour's amendment to Clause 11 of the bill which was intended to preserve powers previously devolved to both Holyrood and Cardiff.

The bill is now set for debate by the House of Lords.

The announcement came in a tweet from the House of Commons Twitter account at half past seven this evening.

House of Commons rejects Amendment 3 to [#EUWithdrawalBill](#) by 321 votes to 297.

Amendment would have removed proposed restrictions on devolved assemblies to legislate on devolved matters & create new collaborative procedures for creation of UK-wide frameworks for retained EU law. pic.twitter.com/RPchgydkS0

– UK House of Commons (@HouseofCommons) [January 16, 2018](#)

Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe Michael Russell said: "It is deeply disappointing that yet again the UK Government has rejected changes to the EU Withdrawal Bill that would have protected devolution.

“As both the Scottish and Welsh Governments have repeatedly said, the Withdrawal Bill must be amended to prevent any devolved powers being removed from the Scottish Parliament.

“Accepting this evening’s amendment based on the Scottish and Welsh Government proposals would have been a clear commitment to correcting the bill.

“As it stands, there is no prospect of the Scottish Government recommending to the Scottish Parliament that this bill should receive legislative consent.

“The Scottish Parliament’s cross-party constitution committee agreed that the Withdrawal Bill, as drafted, is “incompatible with the devolution settlement”. We therefore have no choice but to press ahead with legislation at Holyrood if that’s what it takes to defend devolution.”

Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland, Lesley Laird, said: “Tonight in the Chamber the Scottish Tories rolled over to protect their party instead of protecting the devolution settlement.

“They gave excuses, but could offer no substantial reasons why they would not support Labour’s amendment to Clause 11.

“They acknowledged the fact that they have dropped the ball – but to add insult to injury they then decided to move the goal posts as well.

“Now peers such as Michelle Mone and Alan Sugar are to have more of a say on the future of the Scottish Parliament than elected MPs.

“The Scottish Tory bloc has bragged since the general election about the influence it has on Theresa May’s government. This sorry episode has exposed that boast as being as hollow as the promise from the Secretary of State for Scotland.”

The House of Commons offered all MPs a briefing on the bill

being voted on today which includes one paragraph summarising some of what happened during the Committee Stage of the bill. That paragraph said :

“The Government has committed to amend Clause 11, on devolution, at report stage in order to achieve consensus with the Scottish and Welsh Governments (day 4).”

It appears that commitment has not been adhered to, and The Scottish Secretary of State David Mundell MP was criticised for this during last week's debate on the bill. It became apparent that there would be insufficient time.

The [#EUWithdrawalBill](#) is starting its Report Stage today. We've produced a briefing to inform MPs ahead of the debates, summarising the Bill's Committee Stage. You can access it too by visiting <https://t.co/utBQRE2hLjpic.twitter.com/mxB21HkpA8>

– Commons Library (@commonslibrary) [January 16, 2018](#)