

The Rt Hon the Baroness Royall of Blaisdon



The Leader of the House of Lords

Baroness Warsi  
Baroness Morris  
House of Lords  
London SW1A 0PW

Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC  
Baroness Northover  
House of Lords  
London SW1A 0PW

14 January 2010

Dear Colleagues

The Government tabled a number of amendments on 13 January and I thought it would be helpful to clarify the details of these amendments.

I attach an explanation of each of these amendments and am copying this letter to members who spoke at Second Reading or during Committee Days 1 and 2 of the Equality Bill.

As you know, I welcome any questions from colleagues and would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Lords Ministerial Colleagues will be available at the following times for anyone who wishes to discuss these or any other amendments as we move through the Committee stages.

Tuesday 19 January at 13.30 – 14.30  
Monday 25 January at 13.30-14.30  
Wednesday 27 January at 14.00 – 15.00

I am placing a copy of this letter and attachment in the House Library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Royall'.

**JAN ROYALL**

House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW

Tel: 020 7219 3200 Fax: 020 7219 3051 Email: [pslordsleader@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pslordsleader@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

**EQUALITY BILL: GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS FOR LORDS COMMITTEE,  
TABLED 13 JANUARY**

**Schedule 9**

This amendment provides a revised definition of employment "for the purposes of an organised religion" where an employer such as a Church is permitted to make requirements related to sex, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status or sexual orientation in certain circumstances. The new provision, inserted after the existing sub-paragraph (6) in paragraph 2, makes clear that employment "for the purposes of an organised religion" covers:

- the post of a minister of religion;
- employment that exists to promote or represent the religion (for example, a Director of Communications) or to explain the doctrine of the religion.

Consequentially, the Government also intends to accept amendment 100 which takes out the existing sub-paragraph (8), thus in effect replacing sub-paragraph (8) with the new provision.

**Clause 96**

Clause 96 sets out the criteria which the qualifications regulators must have regard to when deciding what parts of a general qualification cannot be reasonably adjusted for the benefit of disabled people. The current draft of the clause requires the regulator to have regard to:

- the "desirability of minimising" the extent to which disabled people are disadvantaged;
- "the need to secure" the reliability of the qualification, and
- "the need to maintain public confidence" in the qualification.

The amendment replaces "desirability of minimising" (first bullet above) with "need to minimise" thus expressing each of the criteria in equal terms.