



Rt Hon Michael Foster MP
Parliamentary Secretary of State,
Government Equalities Office
9th Floor, Eland House, Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

4th March 2010

Dear Rt Hon Michael Foster MP

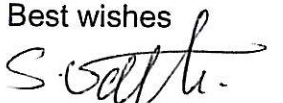
It has been quite a time since we last talked last year, around the time of the consultation on the specific duties proposals. ROTA are very happy to support the Single Equalities Bill, primarily by sitting on the senior stakeholder group (GEO) and the EHRC stakeholder advisory group. We have also developed training to promote the Equality Bill to BAME communities which we will be delivering over the next year.

Regarding the specific duties policy proposal published in January, we are concerned as to how the proposed specific duties will address the issues that we and our partners raised in our responses. We identified that setting equality objectives, and giving significant discretion to how evidence is used, would lead to low profile functions and communities being ignored in meeting the public sector equality duty. We would welcome some clarification or discussion of how the policies could address these concerns.

In the report stage of the equality bill amendments were presented that could have clarified some of these issues. Although at this late stage they were not expected to pass, the Government's statement in response gave a different view of what the public sector equality duty covered than the one we understood the GEO to have. This could raise some concern to us and BAME communities.

We would appreciate some guidance on the governments view so that we can reassure our members on the implications of the Bill.

Best wishes


Dr Theo Gavrielides

Race on the Agenda

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