

Referendum Consultation  
Scotland Office  
1 Melville Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7HW  
reply@scotlandoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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Dear Secretary of State  
**Scotland's Constitutional Future**

Reform Scotland believes the best option for Scotland's constitutional future is Devo Plus, whereby each level of government raises as much as possible of the money it spends. Our report from September last year, Devolution Plus, goes into this in more detail and accompanies our response to the consultation.

We welcome the UK government's proposal to allow the Scottish Parliament to legislate for a legal referendum. There is currently a great deal of comment on the legal situation regarding the referendum and giving the Scottish Parliament the necessary powers will provide much needed clarity and ensure the referendum is decided by the voters and not lawyers.

However, Reform Scotland is mainly concerned with the principle of the Scottish Parliament being able to raise the money it spends and less concerned with the process of how we arrive at that settlement. In that regard, we have no comment on the timing of the referendum or how many questions should be on the ballot paper.

However, Reform Scotland does believe that it is imperative that both the Scottish and UK governments are open and transparent with regard to publishing financial information to help the Scottish electorate reach an informed decision on independence. In this regard we welcome the fact that the independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) will start to provide forecasts of Scottish income tax, landfill tax, stamp duty land tax and aggregates levy receipts from April 2012 to match the powers being devolved in the Scotland Bill. However, Reform Scotland would call on the OBR to provide the figures for all taxes raised in Scotland to help paint a more accurate picture of the economic situation in Scotland. There are currently too many questions and unknowns with regard to the money raised in Scotland, which, as a result, sees disputes and arguments around PESA and GERS each year. If the people of Scotland are to be asked whether they want to become an independent country, or investigate any other options such as Devo Plus, it is in everyone's interest to see the accounts, as it were, before making a judgement. Reform Scotland hopes that the UK government will take this on board.

Yours sincerely,

**Geoff Mawdsley**  
**Director**  
**Reform Scotland**