Twitter Thread by Jess Sargeant



Jess Sargeant
@Jess_Sargeant

The UK internal market bill is back in the Commons today. The Lords made *a lot* of amendments and not just on rule of law and Northern Ireland protocol but on a wide range of devolution issues. Here are my top amendments to look out for today ■

Let's start with *those* infamous powers to break international law (42-27). I set out here last week how a deal could allow the UK government to back down on these. The PM is speaking to von der Leyen later and the Joint Committee is meeting today... https://t.co/c21wYbdS5D

> Next week the UK gov is expected to introduce the Finance Bill with yet more powers to break international law, on top of those in the UKIM bill. This won't go down well in the EU. But with a deal supposedly around the corner, will this allow the UK drop the offending clauses?\U0001f9f5
>
> — Jess Sargeant (@Jess_Sargeant) December 1, 2020

We'll have to see if sufficient progress is made before tonight's vote to allow the UK government to do away with the clauses. But even if MPs reinsert them, the Lords will almost certainty remove them again when the bill goes back on Wednesday - so this is not the last chance

Lord Hope's amendment on Common Frameworks (1) is also one to watch. One of the big criticisms of the bill is that it would remove the discretion of the four governments collectively to agree that divergence was acceptable in some circumstances. https://t.co/mEF2bqSlYp

UKG previously suggested that a compromise on common frameworks might be possible, then rowed back. This is another one the Lords will be likely to push back on if its rejected. If this happens, @paulwaugh reports Gove is thinking of ditching the bill https://t.co/nnDU9MZOYV

Lord Stevenson's amendment (12) adds a new list of exclusions, so mutual recognition and non discrimination would not apply if a gov is pursuing a 'legitimate aim' like environmental goals. I said in Sept this was an areas where UKG should compromise
https://t.co/2dvKly3LaO

This amendment is an interesting one because it appeared to pass by accident when the Government forgot to oppose it (h/t @LabourLordsUK). But it is expected MPs will vote it down in the Commons today https://t.co/n1THp0haMg

The Lords have also removed key provisions on financial powers for the UKG to spend money in devolved areas (48 & 49) and to make the regulation of state subsides a power reserved for the UK Governemnt (51). These clauses are strongly opposed by the Welsh Government.

Whilst the Scottish Parliament has already refused consent for the bill under the Sewel convention. The Welsh Parliament is due to vote tomorrow (delayed from last week). If the Commons rejects these amendments, the chances of consent look slim. https://t.co/0YlLhdRdtW

The Government has said it will oppose all the amendments but with the Lords also looking like it will stand firm on multiple issues, the government will have a fight on its hands.

I'll just leave this here:

https://t.co/bJ7Il7BwAU

And those were only the highlights, check out explainer on other key amendments to the bill https://t.co/3kRtpf5v8C