My Lords,

DATA PROTECTION BILL – GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS

We are writing to provide information about the government amendments tabled today. These amendments all concern technical matters and are designed to correct weaknesses that we have identified as well as issues identified by many stakeholders since the Bill was published in September.

The most significant amendments are those that create new processing conditions for special categories of data in Schedule 1 to the Bill. First, we have an amendment to ensure that electronic publishers of court judgments may publish, even where those judgments reveal matter such as criminal history. This adjustment is needed to allow this publication, essential to our common law legal system, to continue. Second, we have an amendment to ensure that sports governing bodies can maintain the integrity of sport. Data that records certain behaviours needs to be recorded to guard against and detect corruption and fraud.

Enclosed is a table which sets out the purpose of every technical amendment tabled. There will be a few further amendments that we will table as soon as possible. In the main most remaining amendments will be to provide further consequential provision in Schedule 18 to the Bill.

We look forward to our first day of committee stage on 30 October. In the meantime if you want to discuss any aspect of the Bill we are very happy to meet.

We will place a copy of this letter in the House library.

Yours sincerely

Lord Ashton of Hyde

Baroness Williams of Trafford