



## **PRESS RELEASE**

## **DATGANIAD I'R WASG**



**ANN JONES, AM FOR VALE OF CLWYD / ANN JONES, AC DYFFRYN CLWYD**

27<sup>th</sup> January 2010

**EMBARGO UNTIL: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **WELSH ASSEMBLY VOTES YES TO SPRINKLERS IN NEW HOMES**

**WELSH Assembly Members voted unanimously today in support of Ann Jones AM's bid to make the installation of sprinkler systems mandatory in Wales's new homes.**

The Vale of Clwyd AM's proposal has been described as historic by Chief Fire Officers across Wales and numerous organisations in the Fire Safety field including the National Fire Sprinkler Network.

Since introducing the Assembly's first ever backbench Legislative Competence Order (LCO), Ann Jones has won the full support of amongst others, the Welsh Assembly Government, Wales' 3 Fire Services and the FBU.

With overwhelming supportive evidence from the expert and industry community, Mrs Jones's LCO successfully received approval from cross party Committees in both Wales and Westminster.

The Welsh Affairs Committee commended Mrs Jones for her 'enthusiasm and tenacity' in pursuing an order that follows more than two decades of personal experience in the Fire Service. The Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Jane Davidson also paid tribute to Ann Jones's 'determination' and 'commitment'.

Mrs Jones' LCO is expected to pass votes in both Houses of Parliament before gaining Royal assent in the coming weeks. Mrs Jones will then in a position to introduce an Assembly Measure to enforce the objectives of her LCO.

### **Ann Jones AM said**

"I am thrilled to have received unanimous support for this proposal and would like to thank all those who have supported me, from fire fighter to Chief Officer as well as the wider industry.

"This LCO paves the way for a truly groundbreaking Measure that will make new homes in Wales safer for generations to come. As they have explored the issue,

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politicians in Wales and Westminster have seen the overwhelming moral and technical case for sprinkler systems which really do save lives!

“Domestic fire costs the UK economy £7 billion each year and sprinklers can play a key role in bringing this cost down.

“I am proud that the Assembly has backed my LCO today. It means that Wales is leading the way - on a truly international scale. “

#### **Secretary of State for Wales, Peter Hain said:**

“Ann’s LCO is clear in its ambition to save lives and I pay tribute to her efforts in getting this far.

“With her personal experience in the Fire Service, Ann has shown how this process can make a real difference to people’s lives.”

#### **FBU Official Mike Smith said:**

“Ann’s LCO will make a real difference to people’s lives in Wales, ensuring they live in a safer environment, even in their own homes. Although the measure when approved apply to new domestic dwellings only, it nevertheless is a huge step forward in terms of fire safety for our communities and will make the job of my members in Wales in years to come a safer one.”

#### **The National Fire Sprinkler Network’s Vice-Chair, Ronnie King OBE said:**

“The National Fire Sprinkler Network, which has representation from every UK Fire and Rescue Service, wishes to applaud the Welsh Assembly and Ann Jones AM in particular, for giving approval to what is **one of the most significant pieces of fire safety Legislation in the United Kingdom, in modern times.**

“It will lead to making Wales the safest place in which to live in the United Kingdom, from the effects of fire, and can be compared to the installation of air bags in cars. In the

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course of time fire deaths in Wales will be almost eliminated, and the horrific burns injuries reduced by up to 80% because of this wonderful visionary decision taken by the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition it will contribute substantially to reducing carbon emissions, whilst protecting the environment and the safety of fire fighters.

“The Welsh Assembly can feel very proud of the decision it has taken today, and in Ann Jones, it has a true champion for the saving of lives from fire.”

**-ends-**

For further information please contact Alex Bevan (Researcher to Ann Jones AM) on 029 2089 8753