

BBC (Independence) Bill [HL]

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Explanatory notes to the Bill, prepared by the Member in charge of the Bill, Lord Lester of Herne Hill, will be published separately as HL Bill 31 – EN.

BBC (Independence) Bill [HL]

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TO

Provide for the independence of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 The independence of the BBC

After section 198ZA of the Communications Act 2003 (penalties for failure to provide information), insert—

“198ZB The independence of the BBC

- | | |
|---|----|
| (1) The BBC is to be independent in all matters concerning the content of its output, the times and manner in which its output is supplied, and the governance and management of its affairs. | 5 |
| (2) The Prime Minister, the Secretary of State, the BBC Board, OFCOM, and all other persons and bodies with responsibility for matters relating to the governance and establishment of the BBC must ensure that the BBC is able to operate independently. | 10 |
| (3) The Secretary of State must ensure that the BBC is funded so as to be able to function independently and effectively as a public service broadcaster, and in accordance with the mission and purposes set out under the BBC Charter and Agreement. | 15 |
| (4) The licence fee revenue is to be for the exclusive benefit and use of the BBC to fund the performance of its functions. | |
| (5) “The licence fee revenue” means a sum equal to the whole of the net licence revenue paid under regulations under section 365(1) of the Communications Act 2003 (sums payable for licences to use etc. television receivers). | 20 |
| (6) Subject to sections 365 and 365A of the Communications Act 2003, the Secretary of State may not transfer to the BBC responsibility, including in respect of liability and costs, for any public expenditure.” | |

2 Extent, commencement and short title

- (1) This Act extends to the whole of the United Kingdom.
- (2) This Act comes into force on the beginning of the day on which it is passed.
- (3) This Act may be cited as the BBC (Independence) Act 2017.

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B I L L

To provide for the independence of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Lord Lester of Herne Hill

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