

WASHINGTON--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Despite strong representations made by cinemas across the country, the Government has confirmed plans to loosen the laws around film exhibition through its Deregulation Bill.

Cinemas large and small have voiced grave concerns to the industry's association, the CEA, over the proposed plans. Smaller operators in particular, many of which serve remote or isolated communities, feel threatened by the proposals.

Under the proposals being put forward, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport would lower the barrier to those who can legally exhibit big screen content in the community, meaning that the local bingo hall, social club, pub or church could all potentially exhibit films.

CEA Chief Executive, Phil Clapp said:

"It is very disappointing that the Government intends to proceed with the removal of licensing requirements on some types of film exhibition. The whole UK cinema exhibition sector, large and small, was united in its opposition to this unnecessary and damaging change. The route the Government has chosen risks having a detrimental effect on a large number of local cinemas, in particular those operated by smaller companies."

Representations from the cinemas raised a number of concerns with the plans, making the case in particular that:

- There is no evidence of "unmet demand" for deregulation;
- There is a very real danger of diluting existing, very strong, child protection measures by allowing unlicensed venues to exhibit films;
- The "community venue" definition is too weak; and,
- The potential exists to damage the viability of smaller local cinemas, including those run by volunteers, by removing the requirement for a licence for "community venues".

Added Phil Clapp:

“Now that Government had confirmed their plans to proceed, we call on them to work with us to ensure that – as their consultation response says - the cultural and economic aspects of commercial cinema are not impacted by this deregulation.”

Examples of the many smaller cinemas who have voiced particular concerns about the proposals include: WTW Wadebridge, Wells Film Centre, Light House Wolverhampton and Theatr Gwaun, Fishguard.

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Notes to Editors

The report on the government's Deregulation Bill can be found here: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201314/jtselect/jtdraftdereg/101/10102.htm>

The full CEA response to the Government consultation can be found here: <http://www.cinema.uk.org.uk/user/library/documents/main/community-film-exhibition-consultation-cea-response-2013.pdf>

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