Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

Delivering for our community

JOEL JAMES AS | MS

Aelod o Senedd Cymru dros **Ganol De Cymru**

Member of the Welsh Parliament for **South Wales Central**

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Dear Resident,

In 2021, I was delighted to have been elected to the Welsh Parliament to represent my home region of South Wales Central – which covers Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In that time, I have worked hard to be the representative this area deserves: speaking regularly in the Chamber, supporting those who need my help, and helping dozens of charities, community groups and businesses throughout the region.

As a member of the Welsh Parliament's Local Government and Housing Committee, I have been working closely with my colleagues to address issues and concerns relating to affordable housing, second homes, homelessness and council tax, and as a Member of the Petitions Committee, I would like to think that I have worked hard to give a strong voice for those who are campaigning for genuine and worthwhile change.

I also sit on a number of cross party groups, and I am especially proud of being the Chair of the Cross Party Group for Liver Disease and Liver Cancer – it's a group looking to inform, raise awareness, and transform services in Wales for those who have been diagnosed with these terrible illnesses.

With all this in mind, I have created my first 'Annual Review' to highlight some of the work that I have been doing. It's by no means a comprehensive list, but does shed a little light on the work of the past year.

I do hope you find this review informative, and if you ever need any help or assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours

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PS. If you would like to meet me or visit the Welsh Parliament, give me a ring on

0300 200 7471

Senedd Cymru
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PROMOTING OUR REGION

Over the previous year, I have taken every opportunity to visit some of our fantastic charities, businesses, community groups and community projects.

One such project is the brilliant Rhondda Tunnel Society, who are looking to reopen the old Blaencwm to Blaengwynfi railway line - which goes underground and links the Rhondda and Afan Valleys together.

This terrific project, which is supported by a team of dedicated volunteers, aims to repurpose the old railway line and create Europe's longest tunnel for cyclists and walkers. It would have substantial health and tourist benefits and I'm keen to get this tunnel reopened. As such, I am doing everything that I can to support it, by lobbying both the Welsh and the UK Government.

CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

As someone who suffers from hearing loss and wears hearing aids, I'm keen to do all that I can to help those in a similar position - it's one of my top priorities.

Sadly, hearing loss has a massive impact on cognitive decline, and leads to significant risk of social isolation, loneliness, dementia and mental health issues. It also has an impact on a child's early development.

Frustratingly, the NHS in Wales only contracts private opticians, dentists, doctors, and pharmacists to offer free NHS services, and refuses to do so for audiologists. This has led to long waiting lists just for people to have a hearing test, let alone be fitted for hearing aids, and I am actively challenging this.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

FIGHTING FOR SAFER ROADS

One of the main issues raised with me is that of speeding vehicles and dangerous driving, and sadly, this is an issue that blights the entire region that I represent.

One local group that has contacted me about this issue is Brynna and Taff Ely Bridleways – it's made up of horse and carriage riders from throughout the South Wales Central Region.

They not only face the constant threat of dangerous drivers but are slowly losing their historic bridleways and trails. As such, I'm working closely with them to make sure that the concerns of the horse-riding community are fully taken into account by both local and national governments and that the Active Travel Plan considers their needs when designing roads.

IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS

I'm eager to do all that I can to make sure that children living in South Wales benefit from a first-class education. This not only means challenging and holding to account the Welsh Government for any decisions it might make on education, but it also means holding to account local councils. St Monica's Church-in-Wales Primary School in Cardiff is a classic example. It's a great school, but it has started to show its age and is in urgent need of investment. Water runs down the inside walls, black mould is everywhere, and it's been covered in scaffolding for over four years. After openly challenging the Welsh Education Minister to intervene, funding has now been released and work has finally started.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

As a firm believer that our historic environment is an important part of who we are, I've been fighting hard with local residents to protect, not only our open spaces and parklands, such as Hailey Park and the Maindy Velodrome in Cathays, but local buildings which are extremely important to us.

One such example is Cowbridge Old Girl's School, which not only has historical significance, being the first dedicated all-girls school in the UK, but has immense importance to the town.

I've been actively involved in resident action groups, I've lead debates in Senedd about giving people a greater voice on how their communities develop, and I've been campaigning to make it easier for buildings to be purchased and saved.

OPPOSING SENEDD EXPANSION

There has been a lot of coverage in the media about the proposed expansion of the Welsh Parliament from 60 members to 96. There are also plans to get rid of constituencies and create 'super regions', which will then elect their representatives along political party lines.

I'm really concerned about these proposals, which are estimated to cost in excess of £100,000,000, and I believe that this money should be spent on providing better public services, improving our schools and supporting our fantastic NHS.

However, I know that this debate has caused passionate opinions on both sides of the argument, and I am keen to hear your views on the matter – please do consider filling in my online survey at:
www.joeljames.wales/form/seneddsurvey*

*Your data will only be used by Joel James MS in his role as your Member of the Senedd, under Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 covering elected representatives, for the purposes of casework and/or regular email updates.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

CHALLENGING THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

As an opposition member of the Welsh Parliament, one of my key roles is to challenge and hold to account the Welsh Government, and over the previous year, I'd like to think that I have done this by highlighting its record on highway investment and infrastructure.

Indeed, I was the first Member to raise concerns regarding the Welsh Government's consultation on turning sections of the A470 and M4 into toll roads, and I have been heavily involved in discussing this matter in the Senedd Chamber. I have also continually expressed concern over its 'roads review' programme, which has not only caused confusion within the highway industry but has done nothing to solve our congested roads and improve our economic prospects.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

HERIO LLYWODRAETH CYMRU

Fel aelod o'r wrthblaid yn y Senedd, un o'm rolau allweddol yw herio a dwyn Llywodraeth Cymru i gyfrif, a dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, hoffwn feddwl fy mod wedi gwneud hyn drwy dynnu sylw at ei record o ran buddsoddi mewn priffyrdd ac yn y seilwaith.

Yn wir, fi oedd yr Aelod cyntaf i fynegi pryderon ynghylch ymgynghoriad Llywodraeth Cymru ar droi rhannau o'r A470 a'r M4 yn dollffyrdd, ac rydw i wedi bod wrthi'n trafod y mater hwn yn Siambr y Senedd. Rydw i hefyd wedi mynegi pryderon parhaus am ei rhaglen 'adolygu ffyrdd', sydd wedi peri dryswch o fewn y diwydiant priffyrdd ond sydd heb wneud dim i ddistewi ein ffyrdd prysur a gwella ein rhagolygon economaidd.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

GWARCHOD EIN TREFTADAETH

Fel rhywun sy'n credu'n gryf bod ein hamgylchedd hanesyddol yn rhan bwysig o bwy ydym ni, rydw i wedi bod yn brwydro'n galed gyda phreswylwyr lleol i ddiogelu, nid yn unig ein gofodau agored a'n parciau, fel Parc Hailey a Felodrom Maendy yn Cathays, ond hefyd adeiladau lleol sy'n bwysig dros ben i ni.

Un enghraifft o'r fath yw hen Ysgol y Merched y Bont-faen, sydd nid yn unig ag arwyddocâd hanesyddol yn sgil y ffaith mai hi oedd yr ysgol i ferched yn unig gyntaf yn y DU, ond mae hi hefyd yn hynod bwysig i'r dref.

Rydw i wedi bod yn cymryd rhan flaenllaw mewn grwpiau gweithredu preswylwyr. Rydw i wedi arwain dadleuon yn y Senedd am roi mwy o lais i bobl ar sut mae eu cymunedau'n datblygu, ac rydw i wedi bod yn ymgyrchu i'w gwneud yn haws i allu prynu ac achub adeiladau.

GWRTHWYNEBU EHANGU'R SENEDD

Mae llawer o sylw wedi'i roi yn y cyfryngau i'r cynnig i ehangu'r Senedd o 60 o aelodau i 96. Mae yna hefyd gynlluniau i gael gwared ar etholaethau a chreu 'uwch-ranbarthau', a fydd yna'n ethol eu cynrychiolwyr ar sail pleidiau gwleidyddol.

Rwy'n bryderus iawn am y cynigion hyn, gydag amcangyfrif y bydd yn costio mwy na £100,000,000 ac rwy'n credu y dylid gwario'r arian hwn ar ddarparu gwell gwasanaethau cyhoeddus, gwella ein hysgolion a chefnogi ein GIG rhagorol.

Fodd bynnag, rwy'n gwybod fod y ddadl hon wedi achosi safbwyntiau angerddol ar y naill ochr a'r llall, ac rwy'n awyddus i glywed eich barn ar y mater - cofiwch lenwi fy arolwg ar-lein yn:
www.joeljames.wales/form/seneddsurvey*

*Defnyddir eich data dim ond gan Joel James AS yn ei rôl fel eich Aelod o'r Senedd, o dan Atodlen 1 o Ddeddf Diogelu Data 2018 yn ymwneud â chynrychiolwyr etholedig, at ddibenion gwaith achos a/neu ddiweddariadau e-bost rheolaidd

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

BRWYDRO DROS FFYRDD MWY DIOGEL

Un o'r prif broblemau sy'n cael eu codi gyda mi yw cerbydau'n goryrru a gyrru'n beryglus ac yn anffodus, mae hon yn broblem sy'n bla ym mhob cwr o'r rhanbarth rwy'n ei chynrychioli.

Un grŵp lleol sydd wedi cysylltu â mi ynghylch y broblem yw Llwybrau Ceffyl Brynna a Thaf Elái – mae'n cynnwys marchogion ceffylau a throl ledled Rhanbarth Canol De Cymru.

Maen nhw nid yn unig yn wynebu'r bygythiad cyson o yrwyr peryglus, ond maen nhw hefyd yn colli'r llwybrau ceffyl hanesyddol a llwybrau i ddatblygiadau. Felly, rwy'n gweithio'n agos gyda nhw i sicrhau bod pryderon y gymuned farchogaeth, yn cael eu hystyried yn llawn gan lywodraethau lleol a chenedlaethol a bod y Cynllun Teithio Llesol yn ystyried eu hanghenion wrth gynllunio ffyrdd.

GWELLA EIN HYSGOLION

Rwy'n awyddus i wneud popeth a allaf i sicrhau bod plant sy'n byw yn ne Cymru yn elwa o addysg o'r radd flaenaf. Mae hyn yn golygu, nid yn unig herio Llywodraeth Cymru a'i dwyn i gyfrif am unrhyw benderfyniadau y gall eu gwneud ar addysg, ond mae hefyd yn golygu dwyn cynghorau lleol i gyfrif. Mae Ysgol Gynradd yr Eglwys yng Nghymru St Monica yng Nghaerdydd yn enghraifft wych. Mae'n ysgol ragorol, ond mae wedi dechrau dangos ei hoed ac mae angen buddsoddi ynddi ar frys. Mae dŵr yn llifo i lawr y waliau mewnol, llwydni du ym mhobman, ac mae sgaffaldiau wedi bod yn gorchuddio'r adeilad ers dros bedair blynedd. Ar ôl herio Gweinidog Addysg Cymru yn agored i ymyrryd, mae cyllid bellach wedi'i ryddhau ac mae'r gwaith wedi dechrau o'r diwedd.

Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

HYRWYDDO EIN RHANBARTH

Dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, rydw i wedi manteisio ar bob cyfle i ymweld â rhai o'n helusennau, busnesau, grwpiau cymunedol a phrosiectau cymunedol rhagorol.

Un o'r prosiectau hyn yw Cymdeithas Twnnel y Rhondda, sy'n gobeithio ailagor yr hen reilffordd o Flaen-cwm i Flaengwynfi sy'n mynd dan y ddaear ac sy'n cysylltu Cwm Afan a Chwm Rhondda.

Nod y prosiect rhagorol hwn, sy'n cael ei gefnogi gan dîm o wirfoddolwyr ymroddedig, yw addasu'r hen reilffordd a chreu twnnel hiraf Ewrop ar gyfer beicwyr a cherddwyr. Byddai'n arwain at fanteision iechyd a thwristiaeth sylweddol ac rwy'n awyddus i weld y twnnel yn ailagor. Felly, rwy'n gwneud popeth o fewn fy ngallu i'w gefnogi drwy lobïo Llywodraeth Cymru a Llywodraeth y DU.

YMGYRCHU DROS NEWID

Fel rhywun sy'n dioddef colli clyw ac sy'n gwisgo cymhorthion clywed, rwy'n awyddus i wneud popeth o fewn fy ngallu i helpu'r rhai mewn sefyllfa debyg - mae'n un o'm prif flaenoriaethau.

Yn anffodus, mae colli clyw yn cael effaith enfawr ar ddirywiad gwybyddol, a gall arwain at risg sylweddol o ynysu cymdeithasol, unigrwydd, dementia a phroblemau iechyd meddwl. Mae hefyd yn cael effaith ar ddatblygiad cynnar plentyn.

Mae'n rhwystredig iawn mai dim ond optegwyr, deintyddion, meddygon a fferyllwyr preifat y mae GIG Cymru yn eu contractio i gynnig gwasanaethau GIG am ddim, ac mae'n gwrthod gwneud hynny ar gyfer awdiolegwyr. Mae hyn wedi achosi amseroedd aros hir i bobl gael prawf clyw, heb sôn am gael gosod cymhorthion clywed, ac rwy'n herio hyn yn frwd.

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Sganiwch yma am ragor o fanylion

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Mae Comisiwn y Senedd wedi talu costau'r cyhoeddiad hwn o gronfeydd cyhoeddus.

Annwyl Breswylydd,

Yn 2021, roeddwn wrth fy modd o fod wedi cael fy ethol i Senedd Cymru i gynrychioli fy rhanbarth cartref, sef Canol De Cymru – sy'n cynnwys Caerdydd, Bro Morgannwg a Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Yn y cyfnod hwnnw, rydw i wedi gweithio'n galed i fod yn gynrychiolydd teilwng i'r ardal hon, gan siarad yn rheolaidd yn y Siambr, a chefnogi'r rhai sydd angen fy nghymorth, gan helpu dwsinau o elusennau, grwpiau cymunedol a busnesau ledled y rhanbarth.

Fel aelod o Bwyllgor Llywodraeth Leol a Thai'r Senedd, rydw i wedi bod yn gweithio'n agos gyda fy nghydweithwyr i fynd i'r afael â phroblemau a phryderon ynghylch tai fforddiadwy, ail gartrefi, digartrefedd a'r dreth gyngor, ac fel Aelod o'r Pwyllgor Deisebau, hoffwn feddwl fy mod wedi gweithio'n galed i roi llais cadarn i'r rhai sy'n ymgyrchu dros newid go iawn a gwerth chweil.

Rydw i hefyd yn eistedd ar nifer o grwpiau trawsbleidiol, ac rwy'n arbennig o falch o fod yn Gadeirydd y Grŵp Trawsbleidiol ar Glefyd yr Afu a Chanser yr Afu - mae'n grŵp sydd am hysbysu, codi ymwybyddiaeth a thrawsnewid gwasanaethau yng Nghymru ar gyfer y rhai sydd wedi'u diagnosio â'r clefydau erchyll hyn.

Gan gadw hyn i gyd mewn cof, rydw i wedi creu fy 'Adolygiad Blynyddol' Cyntaf i dynnu sylw at rywfaint o'r gwaith rydw i wedi bod yn ei wneud. Nid yw'n rhestr gynhwysfawr ar unrhyw gyfrif, ond mae'n rhoi rhywfaint o flas ar waith y flwyddyn ddiwethaf.

Gobeithio y bydd yr adolygiad hwn yn fuddiol i chi, ac os byddwch chi angen unrhyw gymorth, cofiwch fod croeso i chi gysylltu â mi.

Yn gywir

JOEL JAMES AS | MS

O.N. Os hoffech gwrdd â mi neu ymweld â Senedd Cymru, ffoniwch fi ar

0300 200 7471

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Cyflawni dros ein cymuned

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