

**CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**CENSUS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL**

**SUBMISSION FROM SHETLAND LGBTQ**

On behalf of Shetland LGBTQ I am making this submission direct to you, the Scottish Parliament Committee, who I understand is currently considering the 2021 Scottish Census questions. I am concerned your committee has started to problematically consider changing the guidance for transgender people on how they complete the sex question on the census.

I also note the Parliamentary Committee in considering the census bill have received a number of submissions from gender-critical campaigners calling for the guidance for transgender people that was previously used in the 2011 census to be negatively changed.

In 2011 the compulsory sex question guidance stated that transgender people should answer with the sex they self-identify as, regardless of what's on their birth certificate.

The gender-critical people are calling for that to be rolled-back to either try to force transgender people to answer with their "biological sex at birth" or (if they can't get MSPs to agree to that) with their "legal sex", with only GRC (gender recognition certificate) holders being exempt; therefore not being forced to answer the sex question indicting their sex at birth.

Notwithstanding, if transgender people are forced to reveal their sex birth, and in doing so may be an infringement of their human rights, your Committee must appreciate and understand just how distressing, humiliating and inappropriate it would be to require any transgender person to answer in contradiction to how they currently live and identify.

This question becomes even more pertinent when a number of transgender people who transitioned many years ago do not have a GRC (gender identity certificate), therefore requiring transgender people to give either "biological sex at birth" or "legal sex" in contradiction to their transgender lifestyles would be an intensely distressing and harmful invasion of their privacy, especially so in rural areas such as the Scottish Highlands and islands where their census form is likely to be processed by someone within their small local community.