

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL**

**SUBMISSION FROM JOHN DEUCHARS**

I would like to bring to your attention Section 38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010, which already covers threatening and abusive behaviour. People who are already vociferously opposed to the views of other people, which have been made/said/written in a reasonable and researched manner, are already abusing this Act. They will certainly abuse an Act where free speech appears to have been watered down.

Committed Christians as well as devout (as opposed to extreme) Muslims and Jews would be very concerned about saying anything in support of their Holy Book as certain sections of society would regard it as "offensive" to them and say it put them into "a state of fear and alarm" even though it would be a reasonable and researched argument of/for their faith and/or Holy Book.

John Deuchars  
18 July 2020