

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM KENNETH WATSON

I have read the text of the draft proposals of the above bill and in many cases this would lead to freedom of expression which has been one of the cornerstones of our democracy being considered a hate crime with the possibility of criminal prosecution.

The these draft proposals must be scrapped to avoid this happening and to preserve freedom of speech...

These proposals are vague and subjective and could lead to criminalising legitimate speech if it is merely considered offensive.

Passing the Bill in its current form would divorce Scotland from its proud free speech heritage and undermine freedoms that were centuries in the making.

As such freedom of speech as we have known it down through centuries must be preserved and protected.

This bill as it stands will do much more harm than good. It cannot be passed in its present form. In fact current legislation already covers threatening or abusive behaviour which is likely to cause fear or alarm and new further laws are needed or wanted.

Kenneth Watson
18 July 2020