

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM CONNOR DRYDEN**

I'm writing today to raise my concerns about the Hate Crime Bill in Scottish Parliament. It is genuinely chilling, and a massive blow to the pillar of free speech on which our society sits and thrives.

Offence is subjective, what may cause emotional harm to me could completely roll off of someone else's back. The Scottish governments attempt to criminalise any speech or act that may be deemed offensive is grotesque and authoritarian. Who decides what is offensive? Who decides what's okay and what's not? Everyone should have the right to say what they want and express themselves however they please, regardless of whom it may offend, as long as they are not directly inciting violence on an individual or group at the time. Everyone has the right to stop listening and walk away.

This bill is a power grab masked as virtue. It is against everything this country stands for, and against everything our grand and great-grandfathers fought for. I implore whomever it may concern to fight this bill.

Connor Dryden  
20 July 2020