

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM STEPHEN KELMAN**

Sir / Madam

I am writing to object to the "Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill".

I followed the "Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012" legislation with interest. The demise of this act was of no surprise given the vague language used and apparent naivety of both the problem (offensive behaviour at football) and how the legislation could possibly be enforced in law.

I am genuinely surprised that another piece of legislation is being proposed with all the hallmarks of the Offensive Behaviour act.

If this act goes through, the best we can hope for (again) is that the legislation is proved unworkable and is repealed. As an SNP member I do not like to see the government being embarrassed however that is the route we are going down.

At worst, this act will see individuals with opinions outside of the narrow Overton window (shaped almost exclusively by social media – and changing daily) dragged through court. This would have a significant impact on the individuals concerned and also the Scottish Government who will look silly in the global eye.

Please reconsider

Stephen Kelman  
20 July 2020