

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM KENNETH AND ANNE MACPHAIL

We write to Express grave concerns about the Hate Crime Bill currently being proposed, particularly the stirring up hatred offences. We feel strongly that this should only cover behaviours or comments which are INTENDED to stir up hatred as otherwise freedom of speech could be compromised and the justice system become clogged up with accusations where the accused didn't have any idea that their words could be considered offensive. Lord Bracadale in his independent review, made comments about the need to maintain legitimate debate and we are most concerned that this does not appear to be the case in the Bill as it currently stands. Our freedom of speech is on the brink of being eroded here and we would like our these concerns noted.

Many thanks

Kenneth and Anne Macphail
19 July 2020