

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM HUGH AND JANET ALEXANDER

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We have previously made comment on earlier versions and consider that our views have not sufficiently been taken into account.

We are Christians and regular church attenders. We have real concerns that the Bill as it stands places an unhealthy restraint on freedom of speech.

We are concerned that the Bill in the section on stirring up hatred will undermine the ability of a preacher to preach on the traditional teaching of the Bible. This Bill will allow a complainant to argue that the preacher is stirring up hatred because he is teaching that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour, or that homosexual behaviour is sinful or that same-sex marriage is not a good thing. To be able to express these views should not leave the preacher open to prosecution. This is not right.

Similarly, it is important that people are able to express the view that a transgender woman is not a woman or a transgender man is not a man. Not to go along with the view that a transgender woman is a woman is not hatred but disagreement, and there must be scope in this Bill to allow such freedom of speech.

Hugh And Janet Alexander
22 July 2020