

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM SHARON MARTIN**

Please accept this email as my formal objection to the proposed hate crime bill.

Scotland already has sufficient laws protecting people from aggressive and threatening abuse.

The offence of 'stirring up' is vague in the extreme and open to misinterpretation and misuse.

It is unacceptable to me that freedom of expression, literature and the arts will be seriously damaged in ways which may not be foreseeable.

I refuse to have freedom of speech, a long cherished feature of Scottish culture, diminished in such a way that leaves me and the general public vulnerable to prosecution during the course of conversation or discussion.

People have the right to disagree with each other and insults and swearing can be important tools for impassioned speech.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Sharon Martin

Sharon Martin  
21 July 2020