

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM ANNE SPEED**

I write to express my views on the above proposed Bill, question 6.

I believe that this legislation is unnecessary because “threatening and abusive behaviour” is already covered by Section 38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010. As well as making the creation of further offences unnecessary, this existing legislation establishes a clearer threshold for a criminal offence.

Categorising “abusive” behaviour is a subjective exercise and will vary from person to person, as is also the definition of something as “likely” as opposed to “intended” to stir up hatred. Innocent remarks, even in my home, could be taken out of context and used against me. This could leave the door open to vexatious reports to the police.

As a Christian I value my freedom, achieved at great cost over centuries, to discuss and state freely and courteously my Biblical beliefs and disagree with others without fear of prosecution, and I would expect the same facility to be enjoyed by others with whom I may disagree. The proposed Bill puts this freedom under threat.

(Mrs) Anne Speed  
09 July 2020

[individual's name]  
[date submission received]