

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM LUKE GIBSON**

Dear sirs/ madam

I have read that the justice committee is currently asking for public views on the hate crime and public order (Scotland) bill, as the committee will scrutinise the bill in the coming months.

In my opinion, if passed, this bill would make it a criminal offence for people to say some of the most common things heard in society.

Terms such as "old man" would be made a criminal offence as age will be made one of the protected groups. Although some other commonly used phrases may not be very nice, it is ludicrous to have the use of these prohibited by law. Although the bill has a foundation of some good concepts, it risks the people of Scotland losing their free speech. The bill also grants more privileges and protections to certain groups and not others, which in turn actually encourages inequality, the opposite of what this bill is intended to do.

Equality is when everyone is protected equally under the law.

'The Scottish government recognises that legislation in and of itself is not enough to build the inclusive and equal society that it aspires to.' So is it really in the best interest of the Scottish people to have more new, and pre extended legislation?

Vulnerable groups are already protected under laws such as;

-Section 96 of the crime & disorder act 1998,

-Section 74 of the criminal justice act 2003,

And -Section 1&2 of the 2009 act.

So personally I don't think the people of Scotland need this bill, and I believe this will be the same view as the majority of the public.

Kind regards,

Luke Gibson  
13 July 2020