

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM KNOX CHURCH, PERTH

As the Minister of Knox Church Perth and on behalf of my congregation, I am writing to express my great concern and opposition to the proposed hate crime legislation.

The central problem with this legislation is that it opens the door for the persecution of the church, since it does not protect the freedom of speech nor the freedom of religious expression. As Christians we believe many things with which may be deemed “offensive” to some in our society: Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of sinners; homosexuality is a sin; all other religions are false. We must be free to not only hold to our own sincerely held beliefs, but to speak of these things with one another. Otherwise, what we have entered into is not a tolerant society, but an intolerant one – a society where Ministers and other Christians could effectively be prosecuted, simply because someone heard a message, deemed it to be “hate-speech” and said that they were “offended”. If passed, this legislation will have catastrophic consequences for our nation and will effectively lead us towards atheistic totalitarianism.

Knox Church, Perth
22 July 2020