

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM IAN FANNON**

Good morning

I am writing with regards to the above Bill, particularly with regard to question 6.

I believe that this Bill, as drafted, will have a negative effect on free speech and religious liberty. If this Bill is passed, Scotland would become the most aggressive regulator of citizen's speech in theUK and one of the most in Europe.

Lord Bracadale's Independent Review on Hate Crime report, which led to the Scottish Government's Bill, stressed the need for a clear distinction between legitimate debate and rabble rousing. This Bill does not come anywhere close to reflecting this.

I would therefore ask that key changes are made to ensure that this Bill does not lead to imprisonment for people who are merely stating an opinion.

Kind regards

Ian Fannon  
13 July 2020