

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM MRS SHEILA HINE**

Dear Sir,

I write to express my deep concern that The Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill does not contain enough safeguards for free speech.

As a Christian I believe the Bible.

According to this Bill I would be open to my views on ethical and moral issues being labelled "hate" crime,

simply if a person was to imagine I intended to stir up hatred.

Of course I don't hate those who disagree with me and I would not push my views in an abusive way

but this Bill leaves me vulnerable to false accusations.

As I understand we already have laws covering threatening behaviour and Police Scotland have enough to do,

why do we need this monitoring of free speech?

Lord Bracadale's review on Hate Crime emphasised there must be a distinction between real debate and stirring up trouble

but this is not in the Bill.

I do not wish to abuse anyone, nor to be accused of it , nor to see Church ministers prosecuted for making biblical statements.

Legal safeguards can be put in place as happened in similar legislation in England and Wales.

Please consider the points I have raised as a British citizen, who resides in Scotland,

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Sheila Hine

14 July 2020