

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM DONALD C MACASKILL

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am very concerned about this proposed new Bill regarding the stirring up of hatred. I have many reasons for this concern.

There is **no need** for a new law. The law already covers the stirring up of hatred.

The whole Bill is **too subjective**. There is too much latitude given to the 'offended' person when hatred was not meant or intended. To **disagree** with an opinion, in no way necessarily means hatred. This Bill will prevent many people from entering into healthy discussion for **fear** of recriminations. As Lord Bracadale's Review stated, there must be a **clear distinction** between **legitimate debate/discussion** and stirring up of **trouble/hatred**.

This bill is a **dangerous threat** to **freedom of speech** - a very important element in democracy.

This Bill will **inhibit** religious groups and Churches from enforcing their convictions - the same applies to **atheists** who wish to press home their beliefs.

Regarding same-sex marriage and gender identity, a person who, along with almost the whole world until recently, must be free to hold to the **traditional view of marriage** between one-man and one woman, and male and female being the **only two genders**.

Thank you,

Donald C Macaskill
14 July 2020