

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ALISON LAING

As a Christian I am concerned that some of the measures in this bill will restrict my freedom to proclaim Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation. Many people would be against my Christian views and could claim that they are inciting hatred. This means that I would have no free speech to express my Christian views. There are legal safeguards in the parallel legislation in England and Wales, but none to be included in the Scottish bill. I believe that the existing criminal law already covers threatening or abusive behaviour likely to cause fear or alarm, therefore no new law is needed. The free speech clause on sexual orientation must be strengthened so that what I believe about same sex marriage is explicitly covered and debate on this issue is protected. Please consider my thoughts on this matter.

Alison Laing
16 July 2020