

**JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

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

**SUBMISSION FROM KAREN JACK**

Dear Sir/Madam

I am concerned about the impact the changes to this bill will have on a democratic society that should be based on freedom of speech and thought. Hatred and prejudice are often based on personal experience and perspective and while some aspects are rightly reviled by an accepting and progressive society I am not comfortable with the lack of clarity of the definitions.

Presently we have a conflict of interests between the gender recognition act and the female sex based protections of the Equality Act 2010 with one side shouting loudly about prejudice, hatred and phobias while stating "no debate". My fear is that anyone with a differing opinion, even a justifiable concern, will face criminal prosecution under the terms of this bill. Surely not something that is democratic or based on social welfare?

I am a female member of the snp and have thus far supported the government and the party in most of its policies. However the GRA and the Hate Crimes Bill in their current forms definitely do not have my support.

I trust this will be taken into consideration moving forward.

Yours Sincerely

Karen Jack  
17 July 2020