Twitter Thread by Free to Disagree

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#Thread Take action to defend free speech ■

Stage 2 scrutiny of the Hate Crime Bill begins tomorrow, Tuesday 2nd February. Members of the Justice Committee will debate and vote on various amendments. It is vitally important that more, significant changes are agreed.

We still believe the best course of action is to drop the controversial stirring up hatred offences altogether. At the very least, MSPs must back changes previously promised by the Scottish Government.

The govt has pledged to: restrict the offences to ‘intent’ only; strengthen a free speech provision covering religion and insert a new provision on trans identity; remove provisions on 'inflammatory material' and provide an objective test for what ‘abusive’ behaviour means.

Other useful amendments have been lodged to: remove the vague term 'abusive' altogether; insert a broader trans free speech provision; provide a ‘dwelling defence’ for words spoken in the home; and insert a 'prosecution lock' requiring consent from a senior law officer.

Please take the time to write to Justice Committee MSPs and ask them to back these vital changes. Details of the amendments and how to contact MSPs are below.

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When you write to MSPs, please ask them to support:

Govt amendments 1, 2, 3 and 4 to restrict offending to 'intent' only

Amendment 19 to remove offences on inflammatory material (this amendment is in Liam Kerr MSP's name but is supported by the Govt)

Govt amendments 34, 36, 39 and 40 to provide an objective test for 'abusive'

Govt amendment 77 to broaden the religious free speech clause

Govt amendment 82 to insert a trans free speech clause

Also ask MSPs to support:

Amendment 39A and 40A to remove the term 'abusive'

Amendments 41, 44 and 84 to provide a ‘dwelling defence’

Amendment 55 to require the consent of Crown Counsel to any prosecution

Amendment 82B to insert a broad trans free speech clause

Justice Committee MSPs:

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