



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Jenny Gilruth MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
Scottish Government

By email

8 October 2025

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Bill

As you are aware, the Committee has been taking evidence at stage 1 of the above-mentioned Bill and is due to hear from you at our meeting of Tuesday 28 October.

To date, we have heard from a range of different organisations including religious bodies, secular and humanist groups, academics, human rights experts, the legal profession, children's and parent's rights campaigners, educational bodies and trades unions and young people.

Following today's meeting, the Committee agreed to write to you in advance of your appearance later this month to highlight the serious concerns expressed by these witnesses about both parts of the Bill. Your officials will be able to detail this if they have not done so already but we have heard significant reservations around the drafting of the Bill (both parts), adherence with the principles of the UNCRC, the distinction between religious observance and religious and moral education, the balance between parental and children's rights and administrative and resource implications.

It would be helpful if you could provide further views in writing as to why you believe this Bill is necessary and why it has been drafted in the way that it has. It would be helpful if your response also addressed the serious concerns that have been expressed to us. This will help us understand your position before you appear.

Contact: Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email EHRCJ.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

I look forward to your response and would be grateful if this was provided no later than Tuesday 21 October.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Karen Adam MSP
Convener