

Karen Adam MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

28th April 2025

Dear Karen Adam

We have seen the [Equality Network's submission](#) to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 24th April, and have significant concerns about the presentation of material relating to the law. We would strongly advise the committee to base no statements or comments on legal analysis provided by the Equality Network.

As interveners on the winning side in the case of *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers*, and as a human-rights charity, we strongly object to the framing of compliance with the Equality Act 2010, as clarified by the judgment, as non-compliance with Convention rights or judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. When the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill was passing through Holyrood, Scottish ministers argued that legal gender recognition had no impact on the operation of the Equality Act or the provision of single-sex services. That position is precisely what the Supreme Court has now confirmed that the law is, and always was.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the Equality Network gives a false impression of ambiguity concerning the judgment and appears to advocate non-compliance with the Equality Act. The judgment, as *For Women Scotland* has pointed out in its correspondence with the committee, is a model of clarity. The interim EHRC update has further set out the practical implications, and these are not merely compatible with a human-rights approach but essential to such an approach.

In 2015 the Equality Network lobbied to remove the single-sex exceptions from the Equality Act. This position is incompatible with its current claim that the judgment is a "clear departure" from the law.

We understand that some groups may be unhappy with the implications of the ruling for the provision of single-sex services. This is because activist groups have long misled them by claiming wrongly that trans-identifying people are entitled to use opposite-sex spaces. As interveners in the case, however, we can assure you that there has been an outpouring of relief and gratitude from many women, who overwhelmingly want clear rules that exclude everyone male, however they identify, from all spaces and services designated female-only.

We would like to remind the committee of its duty to consider the judgment's implications for women, who have had their right to single-sex services confirmed and now require clarity from the Scottish Government on a timeline for implementation.

Yours sincerely

Maya Forstater, CEO

Sex Matters is a human-rights charity promoting clarity about sex in law, policy and language
sex-matters.org | info@sex-matters.org

Trustees: Naomi Cunningham (chair), Tim Allan, Michael Biggs, Rebecca Bull, Julia Casimo, Emma Hilton, Kate Owen, Anya Palmer, Claire Weir | CEO: Maya Forstater