Joint Statement on UK Rights Removal Bill

Our human rights are about the values we hold dear and the way we treat one another – they are about dignity, fairness, equality, tolerance, and respect. They are the foundations that help us live together freely and fairly - a safety net to protect us all. We are therefore alarmed that the UK Government has introduced a Bill to Parliament which, if enacted, will repeal the Human Rights Act and will significantly diminish protection for human rights in law.

Our experience of working with individuals and communities across Scotland is that the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) is an essential protection for our human rights. Indeed, many of our organisations submitted evidence to the Independent Review of the Human Rights Act detailing the ways in which the HRA is working well. We also collectively gave many hours of our time to respond to the UK Government's consultation on proposals for this Bill of Rights. However, both the Panel's recommendations and the consultation responses have been disregarded by the UK Government in the development of this Bill.

We are very concerned that there are many elements to this Bill that will significantly reduce human rights protection. These include, for example, restricting / narrowing our relationship with the European Court of Human Rights, lowering standards of protection, and making it harder for the court to protect us from serious and irreparable harm.

The rights removal bill will undermine all of our human rights and significantly impact the realisation of rights for individuals whose human rights are currently most at risk. The UK Government's proposals for reform are out of step with political and public opinion in Scotland. There is overwhelming support across Scotland to go forwards and not backwards on human rights, for a strong human rights legal framework and not one that is watered down.

We therefore strongly urge the UK Government to reconsider this Bill and instead, consider what can be done to better protect human rights for all in Scotland, and across the UK.

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This statement is supported by the following 123 organisations:

Africa & Caribbean Women's Association

African & Caribbean Elders In Scotland



Age Scotland



Alcohol Focus Scotland



Alliance



Alzheimer Scotland



Amnesty International UK



Angus Independent Advocacy



Angus Women's Aid



Article 12 in Scotland



Autism Rights Group Highland



Befriend a Child



BEMIS - Empowering Scotland's Ethnic & Cultural Minority Communities



BRIDGES

British Institute for Human Rights



Bridges Programmes

Carers Trust Scotland

CARERS **RUS**1 SCOTLAND

CEMVO Scotland



Central Scotland Regional Equality Council

CSREC Child Rights International Network



Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S Commissioner Scotland

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Children In Scotland



Children's Parliament



Church of Scotland

The Church of Scotland

Citizens Advice Edinburgh

Citizens Advice Edinburgh

Clackmannanshire Women's Aid



Clan Childlaw

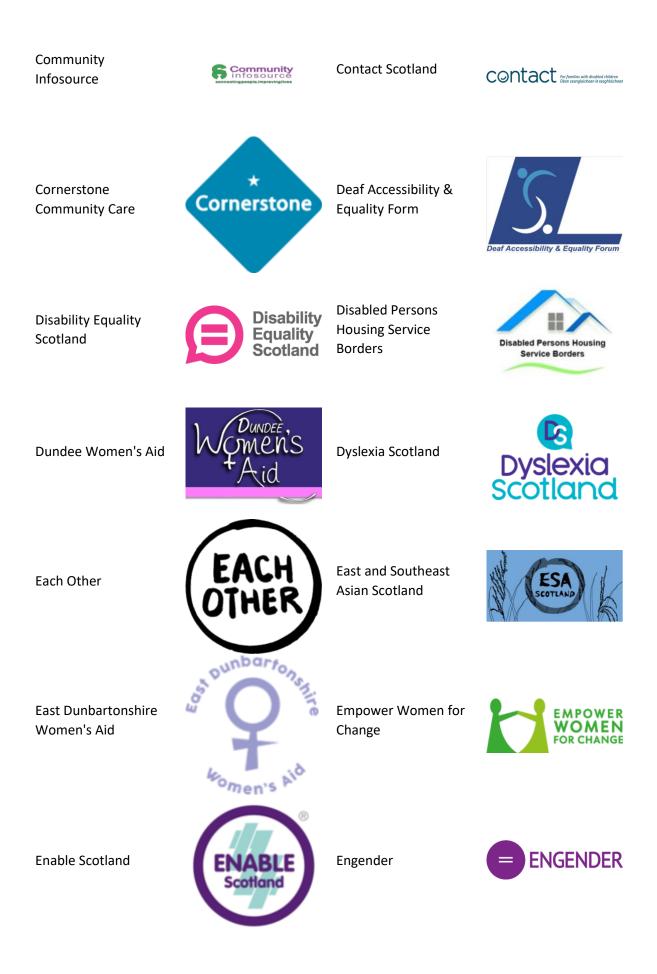


Close the Gap



Coalition of Carers in Scotland









Aid

R

EAL

Maryhill Integration Network



Massive Outpouring of Love (MOOL)



Monklands Women's Aid

Nourish Scotland



National Autistic Taskforce



NOURISH

Parenting Across Scotland



Partners In Advocacy



Perthshire Women's Aid



Pilton Youth and Children's Project PYCP

Play Scotland



Play Wise Therapy



Poverty And Inequality Commission



Quakers



Refugee Survival Trust



Safari

Centre



Safe in Scotland





SCIAF

SCIAF Uniting for a just world Caritas Scotland

Scottish Association of Social Work

Salvesen Mindroom



Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber CIC



Scottish Care



Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities



Scottish Community Development Centre



scottish community development centre Scottish Episcopal Church



Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance



Scottish Recovery Consortium



Scottish Refugee Council



Scottish Sensory Centre



Scottish Trans Alliance





Scottish Women's Convention



Scottish Women's **Rights Centre**



Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance



Shared Lives Plus

Shetland Women's Aid



Shelter Scotland

STAF



Starcatchers



Shetland Women's Aid

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