**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.

This statement is supported by the following 154 organisations:

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| A24 Scotland Aberlour |
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| Ability Borders SCIO About Dementia |
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| Action for Children Adoption UK |
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| Advocacy Western Isles Africa & Caribbean Women's Association |
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| African & Caribbean Elders In Scotland Age Scotland |
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| Alcohol Focus Scotland Alliance |
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| Alzheimer Scotland Amnesty International UK |
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| Angus Independent Advocacy Angus Women's Aid |
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| womens-aid-argyll-and-bute-1 Argyll & Bute Women’s Aid Article 12 in Scotland |
| Art 27 Autism Rights Group Highland |
| Befriend a Child BEMIS – Empowering Scotland’s Ethnic  & Cultural Minority Communities |
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| Bridges Programmes British Institute for Human Rights |
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| Carers Trust Scotland CaTE Consultancy Ltd |
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| Central Scotland Child Rights International Network  Regional Equality Council |
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| Children & Young People's Children 1st  Commissioner Scotland |
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| Children in Scotland Children Poverty Action Group Scotland |
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| Circle Citizens Advice Edinburgh |
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| Clackmannanshire Women's Aid Clan Childlaw |
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| Close the Gap Coalition of Carers in Scotland |
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| Community Infosource Contact Scotland |
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| Craigmillar Literacy Trust Deaf Accessibility & Equality Form |
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| Disability Equality Scotland Disabled Persons Housing  Service Borders |
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| Dundee Women's Aid Dyslexia Scotland |
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| Each Other East and Southeast Asian Scotland |
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| East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid Edinburgh Development Group |
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| Enable Scotland Engender |
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| Feniks Forces Children Scotland |
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| Global Justice Now Govan Community Project |
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| Grampian Regional Grampian Women's Aid  Equality Council |
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| Inclusion Scotland Jacqui Dunbar |
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| Jimmy Reid Foundation Just Right Scotland |
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| KristyInnes PR Latta & Co |
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| Legal Services Agency LGBT Youth Scotland |
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| LGBT Youth Scotland Logo - Reach  Licketyspit Lochaber Women's Aid |
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| Making Rights Real Maryhill Integration Network |
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| Massive Outpouring of Love (MOOL) Monklands Women's Aid |
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| National Autistic Taskforce Nourish Scotland |
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| One Parent Families Scotland Parenting Across Scotland |
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| Partners In Advocacy Perthshire Women's Aid |
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| Pilton Youth and Children's Project PKAVS |
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| Play Scotland Play Wise Therapy    Poverty And Inequality Commission Quakers    Refugee Survival Trust Safari |
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| Safe in Scotland Salvesen Mindroom Centre |
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| SCIAF Scotland’s Campaign Against  Irresponsible Drivers |
| http://www.scid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/cropped-SCID-Logo.png |
| Scottish Association of Social Work Scottish Borders  Social Enterprise Chamber CIC      Scottish Care Scottish Commission for People  With Learning Disabilities |
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| Scottish Community Development Centre Scottish Episcopal Church |
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| Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance Scottish Recovery Consortium |
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| Scottish Refugee Council Scottish Sensory Centre |
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| Scottish Trans Alliance Scottish Women's Aid |
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| Scottish Women's Convention Scottish Women's Rights Centre |
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| Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance Shared Lives Plus |
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| Shelter Scotland Shetland Women's Aid |
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| Sight Scotland STAF |
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| Starcatchers Stirling & District Women’s Aid |
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| Talking Mats The Centre for Excellence for  Children's Care and Protection |
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| Upstart Scotland Visibility Scotland |
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| Voice Ability Welfare Scotland |
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| Who Cares? Scotland With Kids |
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Women Support Project

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