



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01551

Name of petitioner

Scott Pattinson

Petition title

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce legislation that makes it a criminal offence to fail to report child abuse.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

The issues I am campaigning on have been taken up with my local councillor, my local MSP and my Member of Parliament. I have also spoken to Tim Farron MP and Michael Shrimpton.

My replies from Tim Farron MP, Michael Shrimpton and Alison McInnes MSP have all being positive. Tim and Alison have both made efforts on my behalf to make changes to this difficult situation.

The child abuse campaign in Scotland particularly is a rather touchy subject matter from the experiences I have had in both media enquiries and street work when a lot of people seem to think that after Operation Yewtree, Operation Grange and Operation Daybreak that these issues are not a threat.

Child abuse is a campaign in which many people find it difficult to talk about, even more so when it is in direct conflict with establishment figures who have been named and people within their very circle.

There is a fear of speaking out. Various people from legal societies, courts and also police have created this environment of intimidation both north and south of the border. I feel very passionate about this issue especially when I have been involved with Operation Grange and have given them evidence to help in their inquiries.

I wrote to the NSPCC about my proposal to legislate for mandatory reporting of child sex abuse. The NSPCC's response was broadly supportive of my petition, noting that child safeguarding and protection works best when there is an effective structure that:

- focuses on the best interests of the child
- creates good protective, organisational cultures;
- supports children speaking out and being heard;
- has external checks to make sure the right measures are being implemented; and
- takes action when the system fails to protect children properly, including giving protection to those who report their concerns or take action to make children safe.

Petition background information

There are signs within the establishment that care of the young and vulnerable can be opportunities for these opportunists. These predators that do exist in our society take these opportunities to exploit the very system we put in place to protect future generations. With horrid cases being reported, measures have to be put in place that make this most horrid of crimes reduced significantly by making people who witness this most vulgar act open to prosecution for failing to report such an event.

Additionally, I feel that implementing an anonymity scheme when reporting these crimes should be implemented when need be (e.g. if the person feels intimidated or unsafe). Further measures might include protection or assistance for both the abused and vulnerable.

Such practices have been put in place in America and Australia. From 1992 to 2009 in the US, substantiated cases of sexual abuse declined 62%, physical abuse decreased 56% and neglect 10%. Although the referrals increase each year, about 1% of the child population is affected by any form of substantiated maltreatment. Referrals increase each year, but the actual substantiated cases remain low and are approximately the same or decline each year.

I would welcome submissions from Children UK, UNICEF, Child Line, Northern School of Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy, The Child Protection and Safeguarding Consultancy and Shelter (to name but a few) to my petition. Also, the Catholic Church has previously openly mentioned accepting mandatory reporting, as they themselves are in the process of stripping their very own members that have been found guilty of child abuse.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/mandatoryreporting>

Related information for petition

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandated_reporter

https://fullfact.org/factchecks/mandatory_reporting_child_abuse_daniel_pelka-29203

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

NO

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

N/A

