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Proposed Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-Restricted Sales etc.) (Scotland) Bill

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

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Please choose one of the following:

I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

Too often members of the public have abused, and even assaulted, me in the course of my work.

Q2. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to assaults on workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?

A new statutory offence

Please explain the reasons for your response

The current system does not identify whether an assault is in the course of my work environment and often the resulting abuse and assault is because of company practices you are employed to conduct. In serious incidents these convictions could highlight how severe or bad and help identify poor practice

Q3. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to abuse, harassment, threatening or obstruction of workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?

A new statutory offence (for all these types of behaviour)

Please explain the reasons for your response

As stated previously

Q4. Do you think that there are other steps which could be taken (either instead of, or in addition to, legislation) to achieve the aims of the proposal?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Companies should be forced to publish the number of incidents where staff are abused or assaulted whilst employed in customer facing roles.

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

Q5.1. (a) Government and the public sector - Broadly cost neutral

Q5.2. (b) Businesses - Broadly cost neutral

Q5.3. (c) Individuals - Some reduction in cost

Please explain the reasons for your responses.

Collecting and enforcing the rules inevitably cost more for the police and the companies.

Business should have procedures in place to already deal with the issues but often don't inform or support workers who complain as the customer is always right, which is wrong, what they mean is they might lose out on future revenue.

Q6. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your responses.

Companies and individuals involved would realise the issue of abuse and assault of retail staff employed to do a job are just as valued as anyone or anything else in the retail environment. This would filter through to changing attitudes and less incidents taking place thus reducing the initial cost of highlighting the issue.

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

Please explain the reasons for your responses.

It is peoples perceptions that need to change not those providing the service. Retail has predominately employed women, as it is seen as a low paid job and somehow less worthy employment.

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

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Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your responses.

People make choices when making a purchase. They are obliged to consider numerous things before closing the sale. This sometimes involves emotional feelings and can often lead to internal conflict which should not be taken out on a member of staff.

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal, for example, other trigger points for violence and abuse, and other workers who should be covered?

All members of the public should expect to be treated with respect and consideration. Unfortunately human nature makes people react in different ways. The phrase the customer is always right is well known and ingrained into all customer facing roles today and the public are rightly aware of this, however, the emergency service or other public bodies are protected specifically but retail workers are not. These workers

have very often had to deal with the individual concerned before the agencies mentioned have even become involved.

Q11. Which of the following describes your retail-sector experience (please tick all that apply)?

Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption on the premises (e.g. pub)	No
Working in premises selling alcohol for consumption off the premises (e.g. shop)	No
Working in premises selling other age-restricted products (e.g. tobacco, knives etc.)	No
Working in other retail premises	Yes
None of the above	No

Q12. Which of the following describes your experience of violence or verbal abuse in the retail sector (please tick all that apply)?

I have been the victim of physical violence	Yes
I have been the victim of verbal abuse	Yes
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to physical violence	Yes
I have witnessed colleagues being subjected to verbal abuse	Yes
None of the above	No

Q13. Please give details of any personal experience that you would wish to share. (Please avoid naming any other person or giving information that would allow another person to be identified)

I have been verbally abused, assaulted, intimidated and treated like a lesser human being while employed in retail for 26 years. I have also been assaulted outside of work because of where I worked in the past.

