

80250432

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

### Page 2: About you

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

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

*No Response*

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Representative organisation (trade union, professional association)

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

National Federation of Retail Newsagents (NFRN)

### Page 7: Your views on the proposal - Aim and approach

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**

The NFRN has been calling for greater protection of retail workers for some time and fully supports this bill. There are an increasing number of cases of retail staff being physically or verbally abused for enforcing the laws relating to age restricted products. In London earlier this year, a refusal of sale

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

escalated to the murder of the retailer. No member of staff or shop owner should work in fear of being attacked in the work place.

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**

By categorising an assault as an offence, it is being made clear how seriously the matter is being taken and importance being given to protecting retailers when they are carrying out their statutory responsibilities. Had the retailer not refused, they may have been committing an offence themselves.

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**

The NFRN feels that it is important to send the message that no kind of physical or verbal abuse is acceptable in these circumstances and that engaging in such activity carries with it significant penalties.

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.**

The Scottish government needs to ensure that a zero tolerance message is consistently and widely broadcast, so that there can be no doubt of the position regarding the abuse of retail workers and the penalties for those who transgress.

## Page 11: Financial impact

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

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
<b>(a) Government and the public sector</b>			X			

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

<b>(b) Businesses</b>				X		
<b>(c) Individuals</b>				X		

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

The NFRN would hope that this bill would result in some reduction in costs as retailers have to deal less with the aftermath of physical and verbal attacks, ranging from damage to the shop to costs incurred as a result of staff absence following incidents.

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

Unsure

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

Other than being successful in reducing incidents of abuse, with the attendant costs, the NFRN cannot see how the bill could be more cost effective but remains open to suggestions.

## Page 13: Equalities

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)

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

The NFRN is not aware of any negative impact of protecting all retail workers from abuse.

## Page 15: Sustainability

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 response.**

The Bill should provide a better working environment for many retail workers, improving their quality of life and lessening missed days work due to attacks. This should help businesses by reducing costs and staff turnover.

## Page 16: General

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?

No.

## Page 17: Personal Experience - Optional questions

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

None of the above

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

None of the above

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)

*No Response*