

## **Claudia Beamish MSP**

South Scotland

PROPOSED PROTECTION OF WORKERS  
(RETAIL AND AGE-RESTRICTED SALES ETC.)  
(SCOTLAND) BILL

Our Ref: GH/NOT 01001/01180071  
Your Ref:

03 April 2018

### **Not Part Of The Job Consultation Response**

I am writing in support of my colleague Daniel Johnson MSP's proposed Bill.

Workers particularly in the retail sector are subjected to an ongoing torrent of abuse and violence from members of the public. This is through no choice of their own and it is for upholding laws which we have made them responsible for. Shop workers are well aware of the fines and criminal record they will receive if they fail to ask for ID, not to mention the loss of income and the often life-changing consequences a simple mistake in this regard can make to their lives.

We expect shop workers and on-sales retailers such as pub and club staff to uphold the law and protect young people from the effects of alcohol. It is only right that as such we give them the proper protection they deserve to carry out this role without facing; abuse, threats, physical violence, damage to property, embarrassment and stress.

A member of my staff is a former retail manager and has discussed with me in detail the effect the stress and fears of making a mistake in this respect can have on your life. For instance the worry that you may have served someone who is underage despite having years of training and following process meticulously.

The stressed and upset colleagues who have been shouted at, sworn at, had things thrown at them, customers threatening to get them outside, to report them to the media, to call head office and that they would be out of a job tomorrow all the way to actually having to have abusive and violent customers removed from the store by police. What I have been told has made the situation worse is that stores, especially convenience stores have cut staff back in the face of recession and rising costs. There may only be one or two people in the shop therefore shop staff are often alone, outnumbered and severely intimidated.

**Claudia Beamish MSP** | Member of the Scottish Parliament for South Scotland

**Email:** [claudia.beamish.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:claudia.beamish.msp@parliament.scot) **Website:** [www.claudiabeamish.com](http://www.claudiabeamish.com)

**Parliamentary Office** The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP Tel: 0131 348 6889

**Regional Office** 12 St Vincent Place, Lanark, ML11 7LA Tel: 01555 664 065

My staff member has recited to me that he himself was often threatened with things such as; having his car burned, people saying they knew where he lived or that if he didn't sell them alcohol they would just take it. He says that these sorts of incidents can't just be left at the door when you leave work but often leave you shaken and worried for days at a time.

I fully support Mr Johnson's proposals and hope that we soon have a law in place that gives real protection to those who are facing threats and violence for upholding the laws which are passed in our Scottish Parliament.

92% of retail workers have endured physical and/or verbal abuse in the workplace according to a recent survey conducted by the BRC(British Retail Consortium). Also staggeringly there has been a 363% increase in the rate of violence or verbal abuse against staff in the last four years according to the BRC since 2012. I have long supported USDAW's "Freedom From Fear Campaign" and now is the time to act to end the abuse.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claudia Beamish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Claudia Beamish MSP**  
**Member of the Scottish Parliament for South Scotland**