How to influence a Bill in the Scottish Parliament

What to say

- You can tell the Committee and other MSPs that you agree with what is in the Bill.

- You can suggest changes.

- It is also a chance to say that there are things missing and should get added.

Even if you fed in your views at the consultation stage before the Bill, it is a good idea to reinforce them now.

Don't assume that because something is in the Bill it will happen. If no-one says it is a good move and other people do write in to object, it could get taken out.

It is ok to say you agree with some parts of the Bill and say you disagree with others.

For the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Bill, the call for written views is at:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/48017.aspx

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At Stage 1 the Committee issues a list of questions, which is based on the wording of the Bill.
- This is an important opportunity to comment.

- All comments can get made public. You should contact the staff at the Parliament who support that Committee if you want your comments to be in confidence.

- You do not have to answer all the questions in the list.   You might want to concentrate on an aspect that is important for you.

Sometimes people want to raise something that is not really about the Bill, but is a related matter. Examples here could be whether there is enough money for social care services, or the difficulties some people have in getting a care manager. Another example is a problem that affects one person.

- The Committee or Parliament may not be able to tackle it as part of this Bill. So you can ask them to look at dealing with the issue in another way.
- You can ask them to raise it with Ministers.
- Or you can ask them to encourage someone else who has responsibility – such as a local authority or local NHS Board - to do something.
- You can ask for their advice on how to tackle the matter.

The closing date for the written views on the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Bill is **Tuesday 24th April 2012.**

Responses should be sent, wherever possible, electronically and in MS Word format to: healthandsport.committee@scottish.parliament.uk

Hard copy responses may be sent to:
Health and Sport Committee, T3.60, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP

The committee wants responses to be no longer than 4 sides of A4.

If you need information in other formats, or have other questions about sending written comments, the contact is: Rebecca Lamb
phone: 0131 348 5410
email:rebecca.lamb@scottish.parliament.uk

Who to say it to

You can send your comments to the Committee. The contacts for each committee are on the Scottish Parliament website.

The Committee is most involved at Stages 1 and 2

For this Bill it is the Health and Sport Committee.

You can get more information about the Committee at
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/29829.aspx

Email: healthandsport.committee@scottish.parliament.uk

0131 348 5410

You can contact any of the MSPs who represent you.
- Your Constituency MSP is the person who was elected to represent your local area.
- We also have 7 MSPs who represent to people in a Region.

MSPs are most involved at Stages 1 and 3.

You can find out who your constituency MSP is and all the people for your Region from the Scottish Parliament website:
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/9959.aspx

Generally, the Committee will be better able to deal with very detailed aspects of the Bill. This is because they have more time and because they generally have more background understanding of the issues around this topic.

Different MSPs have experience and an interest in different topics. It can help to find one or 2 MSPs for your area – constituency or region – who understand about social care, or about people having independence and control in their lives. You can then tell them about what changes you want to see as a result of this Bill.