Local Government and Communities Committee

Consideration of the Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016

Submission from Julia and Daniel Laurie

Dear Sirs

In principal I agree with reforming the council tax, but the current proposal is grossly unfair, as it does not take into consideration the ability to pay the large increases of the higher bands.

In the area in which I live, many people have lived in their houses for over 40 years, my husband and I have been in our house for 32 years, and like so many others we struggled through many hard times to pay a mortgage with interest rates that were very high at that time to secure a home for our family, and a secure home in our retirement. We in no way grudge the sacrifices to secure our home, but the fact that these houses are now worth considerably more is totally irrelevant to our ability to pay a much higher tax.

My husband and I are now both retired and our incomes are greatly reduced and generally fixed. It is therefore completely unacceptable to increase the burden on those who have no means of increasing their income.

No tax on one’s home is fair, the only fair solution is a local income tax which relates directly to one’s income year by year. The money would be collected from a higher pool, and would only be paid by people earning enough to pay income tax, including pensioners. The information I have read suggests our council tax will increase by 17.5%, which I believe is potentially as unfair as the poll tax was, and I believe greater thought should be given to the proposed alteration to the council tax system, after all a revolt against payment would be very damaging to the SNP principals of which my husband and I are very supportive.

Julia and Daniel Laurie.