Submission from Graeme Davis

Dear Committee Clerk [The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill]

I'm writing to express concern at the proposed The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill. I'm a St Andrews graduate (twice, MA and PhD) now a Professorial Research Fellow at the University of Buckingham, a University founded by Royal Charter and with a particular emphasis on academic freedom. I know that the autonomy available to the University of Buckingham has enabled it to excel in many areas and has allowed it to think outside the box. I know the ability of this University to do things differently has provided a challenge to other universities throughout the UK, and that responding to that challenge has enriched all.

Against this background I'm concerned that the weakening of autonomy to St Andrews through this proposal will cause academic quality at St Andrews to be compromised, and academic reputation to be belittled in international forums. Any university anywhere operating with the reduced autonomy proposed by this measure would by definition be a second-rate institution. I would be very sad indeed to see this fate inflicted on my St Andrews.

Dr Graeme Davis