Dear Sir/Madam,

As a member of the General Council of the University of St. Andrews, I am writing to express my concern regarding The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill which is due to pass through the Scottish Parliament in the autumn of 2015. I understand the deadline for responses is Friday 4th September, 2015.

I appreciate that if these policies are passed it will allow more transparency, accountability and inclusivity, but there is a danger that the Bill will mean Universities losing autonomy and diversity.

The University of St. Andrews has a world-wide reputation of providing first-class education based on its ability to choose and deliver innovative enterprise. I am concerned that if this Bill is passed it will have a detrimental effect in the University being able to attract the best students and staff, and funding.

This may well deter the many philanthropic donors of which the University is renowned as well as affecting the contribution the University makes to the national economy. I believe St. Andrews delivers £12 benefit for every £1 received in government funding.

If this Bill is passed these new regulations will quite likely mean that Universities will lose their autonomy and in its place there will be direct political influence at the cost of academic freedom. This is unnecessary bureaucracy not only for St. Andrews but all Scottish Higher Education, for the economy and the country.

Yours faithfully

Wilma Cairns (Rev.)