To whom it may concern.

I am an airgun owner currently residing in England, and whilst this law will have little effect on me, I still wish to lend my support of my fellow shooters north of the border by making my opinion known.

I do not agree with this proposed law in the slightest. Air guns do not present a danger to the public in Scotland, despite a relatively high number of unregulated airguns in circulation (500,000 according to estimates), deaths and injuries from such weapons remain an absolute rarity. Clear proof in my opinion that the overwhelming majority of Scots in possession of these weapons are entirely trustworthy and responsible. As for the irresponsible minority, laws already exist to deal with those who misuse airguns (though they are often not properly enforced). I believe a rigorous campaign against the misuse of airguns and strict enforcement of existing laws will be far more effective than licensing.

Licensing will only affect and inconvenience the law abiding. It is utterly laughable to think that the criminally motivated will willingly turn in their airguns to the police or apply for a licence. Furthermore, what is to stop criminals from simply buying airguns in England or Wales and taking them back to Scotland? Virtually nothing, considering there is no border control.

I am also curious to know how the government will enforce this legislation and cover the costs. 500,000 airguns (and that number could well be even higher) in circulation, nobody knows where they are or who has them. Ensuring that every single one goes on a licence or is turned in for destruction will be a logistical nightmare for an already overstretch police force and legal system.

In conclusion, at best I see this law as little more than political posturing and vote buying. At worst, yet another sinister attack on individual liberty and an attempt to further disarm the public and create a total state monopoly on bearing arms. A disturbing prospect to one such as myself who has studied political history extensively and knows what can happen when a state has such disproportionate power over a populace, but that's another subject entirely. I sincerely hope the Scottish government sees sense and shelves this ill thought out law, but I won't hold my breath. King Salmond seems to have made up his mind on this one. So much for democracy.

J. Hutchison.
Scottish Parliament: Local Government and Regeneration Committee: Call for evidence on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill.

Submission Name: J. Hutchison
Submission No: 4.
Submission on: Air Weapons