Written submission from Robert Gladstone

I am a partner in a family business that owns 1000 hectares of land. Half our land is an upland sheep farm, and the other half is commercial and amenity forestry. We have one protected agricultural tenant. We also provide affordable housing, hydroelectricity, and biomass heating. The partners are actively engaged in a number of community activities.

I do not consider land reform to be necessary. I believe that the Scottish Government are wasting resources in trying to solve problems that do not exist. A Land Reform Commission is not necessary.

I object to the proposed "Right to Buy for Sustainable Development". There is a misconception that landowners are holding back land that could be developed. This is not the case. Land is generally not the main constraint on development. In any case, the bill does not define "sustainable development". This whole section is flawed.

Re-introduction of Sporting Rates will create considerable administration costs, which may not be covered by any additional income.

My main experience is with lowland deer. On our land we manage the deer population in accordance with best practice. There is no need for further legislation or powers being granted to SNH.

The proposals for Agricultural Holdings will do nothing to stimulate the let land sector. Landowners no longer trust politicians, and will not be encouraged to let land until there is freedom of contract. We have too much Government interference, and need no more.