Anonymous submission C

I only wish to comment on the succession part of the coming Bill.

The recently published Government figures show a steep decline in the number and area of tenanted farms in Scotland. If this trend is allowed to continue, in 30 years there will be no long term tenanted family farms left.

Since the primary letting vehicle in use now for new lets is the Short Limited Duration Tenancies (SLDTs), with a few Limited Duration Tenancies (LDTs), neither of which are suitable for long term sustainable farming businesses, the remaining 91 act tenancies must be ring fenced and protected from further evictions.

The succession provisions must be widened to not only grandchildren, but also nephews, nieces, and business partners.

Where a sheep farmer for example has a keen young shepherd, but no family of his own, he should be able to take the shepherd into partnership, and after 2 or 3 years, pass the tenancy on to him. This would preserve the essential skills and hefted flocks so vital and scarce today. An older farmer would be far more likely to retire, secure in the knowledge that his lifetimes work will not be sold down the river and will be carried on ad infinitum.

Rural people, whether farmers or workers must have stability to invest in business, and build communities. Long term tenure is the only way to achieve this, better through ownership, but a 91 act tenancy coming a close second. Short term arrangements are a road to nowhere.