

PE1458/HHH

Petitioner submission of 21 June 2017

I would like to draw to the attention of Committee members a development in the United States which has seen the release of declarations of interest by members of the US Supreme Court, an article about which can be viewed online here:

<http://fixthecourt.com/2017/06/justices-disclosures-show-continued-stock-sell-off-in-2016/>. The releases can be viewed online at: <http://fixthecourt.com/2016disclosures/>.

I urge Committee members to study the information released by US justices which complements declarations of other branches of the US Judiciary already made known to the Petitions Committee in previous submissions.

These documents are an example of how a democracy achieves the publication of judicial declarations and registers of interest without any difficulties. The publication of such material clearly increases transparency, accountability and would bring gains in public trust in the justice system.

Given the level of detail in the recent US Supreme Court disclosures, I urge members to put questions and points to the Lord President and Judicial Office on applying the same level of detail as appears in the US declarations to a register of judicial interests for members of Scotland's judiciary.

I also wish to draw attention of the Committee to recent further media interest in the proposal to create a register of judicial interests in the National newspaper.¹²

Members may also wish to be aware of reports <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/plane-daft--judge-flies-10417196> relating to the recent rise in trips undertaken by the judiciary, after an earlier attempt by former Lord President Lord Brian Gill to limit judicial overseas travel, a subject which does entail business, meetings & speeches on legal topics & legislation by members of the judiciary which should form part of a register of interests for the judiciary.

¹ The National, *Judiciary chief to face MSPs over register of interests*, 1 April 2017

² The National, *Top judge to give public evidence on transparency*, 13 June 2017