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Scottish Trans given permission to intervene in transgender law block court case



Hamish Morrison

9 August 2023 · 2-min read

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Alister Jack
British politician



Scottish trans rights activists protest outside the UK Government's offices in Edinburgh (Image: NQ)

A SCOTTISH trans advocacy group has said it has been given permission to intervene in a legal challenge against Westminster's block on transgender law reforms.

Scottish Trans, which forms part of the LGBT rights charity the Equality Network, said it had been given permission by the Court of Session to submit written arguments to support the Scottish Government's arguments against the UK block on its Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

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The bill was blocked by Scottish Secretary Alister Jack earlier this year, in an unprecedented move which infuriated the [Holyrood](#) administration and trans rights activists.

The controversial legislation sought to make it easier for transgender people to obtain a gender recognition certificate – which allows people to change their legally recognised sex on documents such as birth certificates – but critics said it would have collapsed the legal distinction between sex and gender, potentially posing threats to women’s safety.

Jack blocked the bill with a Section 35 order, [arguing it would have interfered with UK-wide equalities law](#).

The case against his decision, brought by the Scottish Government, is set to be heard between September 19 and 23 this year.

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Vic Valentine, the manager of Scottish Trans said: “The Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill would significantly improve the process that trans men and women in Scotland use to update the sex recorded on their birth certificates, so that at important moments of their lives, such as registering to be married, they would be able to show a document that reflects who they truly are.

“More than 30 countries or territories around the world have laws that are similar to or even more progressive than the one agreed by a large majority of MSPs at the end of last year.

“Evidence from those places shows that all these laws result in are better lives for trans people.

“We think that it is very important that the voices and views of trans people in Scotland are heard in

this case, which is why we applied to intervene.

“The UK Government’s block of this bill does nothing but force trans men and women to continue to have to use an intrusive, difficult and expensive process, simply to live their lives with the dignity we all deserve.”

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