



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# John Wilson MSP

## Representing Central Scotland

### May 2015 Newsletter



### No to TTIP

John has joined the campaign opposing the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) spearheaded by 38 Degrees.

TTIP, a controversial new free trade agreement currently being negotiated between the EU and the United States, aims to promote trade by reducing tariffs and aligning regulation over certain industries between the EU and the US.



John joining the campaign outside Parliament before the TTIP debate on the 29th of April

However, TTIP could have severe consequences for Scotland. By wearing down the autonomy the Scottish and UK Governments have, the deal could allow big businesses greater influence over health, food, and safety regulation, employment rights, and environmental protection.

TTIP could put the provision of public services at risk, as well as potentially putting the NHS at risk of privatisation by opening up the health sector to American companies.

One of the most controversial aspects of TTIP is the legal mechanism it creates, the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) which could allow corporations to take governments to court regarding new regulation that could potentially harm profits.

On Wednesday the 29th of April the Parliament held a debate on TTIP, initiated by the European and External Relations Committee. In the 48 hour period before the debate alone, John had more than 250 constituents contact him voicing their concerns over TTIP.

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Ahead of the debate John said:

*“TTIP will negatively impact on the delivery of public services, employment rights, and the democratic process itself.*

*The proposed appeals process involved in TTIP undermines the existing judicial system, a system that while not perfect allows us to resolve issues in a relatively open and transparent manner.*

*I will be taking this debate as an opportunity to reject TTIP.”*



John campaigning against TTIP in Coatbridge

## Making Renting Right

John was pleased to have the opportunity to support Shelter Scotland's campaign Make Renting Right. The campaign aims to reform the private rented sector to work better for both tenants and landlords.



## The Living Wage and In-Work Poverty

John has long been an advocate of the living wage, and had the opportunity to voice this stance in a debate held in Parliament on the 30th of April.

John argued that the national minimum wage should be raised to be at the same level as the living wage.

However, John warned the Parliament that raising the minimum wage to meet the living wage was not sufficient in itself to eradicate in-work poverty, but that it was an essential part of a toolbox of options that must be used by the Government. He noted that other aspects of employment, such as banning zero-hours contracts and ensuring that those on lower incomes do not lose tax credits or benefits due to a rise in the minimum wage, must also be taken into consideration.

John said:

*"It is no longer acceptable that those in employment should be facing poverty, as a society we must ensure that those in work should be paid at least the Living Wage as a first step to reducing in-work poverty."*

### UPCOMING SURGERIES

#### Monday 11 May

Chryston Cultural Centre- 10-11AM

Townhead Community Centre- 11:30AM- 12:30PM

ASDA Coatbridge- 1PM-2PM

#### Monday 18 May

Bellshill Cultural Centre- 10AM-11AM

South Dalziel Studios- 11:30AM-12:30PM

## Stage 1: Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill

On Thursday 23rd April the Parliament held the Stage 1 Debate on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill. As the Deputy Convenor of the Local Government and Regeneration Committee, the committee appointed to scrutinise the bill, John has been heavily involved in consultation and receiving evidence on the different aspects of the bill.

The bill is designed to provide a way to regulate activities that while legal could potentially have negative effects on individuals or communities, including alcohol, air weapons, taxis and private hire vehicles, metal dealing, public entertainment venues and sexual entertainment venues.

In a speech during the Stage 1 debate, John raised concern regarding the potential of 'trading up', saying:

*"...we must not encourage individuals to look at the cost of licensing an air weapon at £80 and think that they could instead apply for a shotgun license at £79.50 or a firearm license at £88. The trading-up debate is there. Individuals who may have a license, and who may be appropriate people to hold one, could trade up to hold a firearm or a shotgun rather than holding an air weapon."*

Following the Stage 1 debate, the committee will be considering amendments for Stage 2 of the bill.

## Reducing Air Pollution in Central Scotland

On Thursday 30 April John questioned the Government over its role in reducing levels of air pollution in light of the ruling by the UK Supreme Court that the Government must take immediate action in order to reduce illegal levels of air pollution.

Air pollution in Central Scotland reached its worst levels in three years on 17 March.

Drawing attention to the widespread nature of air pollution in Scotland, John said:

*"...[the] Scottish Government...must take immediate action to reduce air pollution in cities that are found to have illegal levels of air pollution. [But] it is not just cities that have high levels of air pollution; we have high pollution levels in certain villages in North Lanarkshire, such as Chapelhall."*

The Government stated in response that the results of a recent consultation on climate change would be released by the end of the year.