



The Pagan Federation (Scotland)  
PO Box 14251,  
Anstruther,  
Fife KY10 3YA.

Email: [enquiries@scottishpf.org](mailto:enquiries@scottishpf.org)  
Website: <http://www.scottishpf.org>

29<sup>th</sup> October, 2013.

Mr. David Stewart MSP,  
Convener,  
Public Petitions Committee,  
The Scottish Parliament,  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP.

Dear Mr Stewart,

**Re: PEO1487 Religious Observance in Schools**

I write on behalf of the Scottish Pagan Federation to express our support for the above petition which aims to change opt-out to opt-in for participation in religious observance in Scottish schools.

The parental right to opt out of RO ought to be in every school's handbook, as should each school's policy on inclusion and equality. However, the fact that many schools omit this information begs the question why both the law and the aims of a Curriculum for Excellence are being ignored – and by whom, exactly. In addition, concerns have been expressed about a recent, worrying trend for evangelical, creationist Christians who inveigle their way onto some school premises in a variety of guises in order to proselytise to children. Neither of these is acceptable nor do they reflect the ethos of the Scottish Government's flagship policy *Belief in Dialogue*.

Both matters are of grave concern to many and they urgently need to be addressed if all schools are to be seen to be models of inclusivity. In an ideal Scotland, this model would accurately reflect the demographic in the 2011 Census question about faith and belief and RO in schools would be a matter of genuine choice.

Whilst this letter is primarily a letter of support for the motion put to you by the Scottish Secular Society, I would be more than happy to discuss our concerns in depth and detail should you wish this.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona McAllister

Youth Officer / Depute Presiding Officer  
**The Scottish Pagan Federation**

The Pagan Federation (Scotland) is an autonomous national body within the Pagan Federation. It is secured by The Pagan Federation Ltd, a not for profit company, No. 4056879, registered in England & Wales, and limited by guarantee. Registered Office:  
Town Farm, Tibshelf, Derbyshire, UK DE55 5NY.