

Written submission from Diane and George Ross

We are small landowners and rent our land out under the 1991 Act. We bought and paid for our land and receive a small rent in return. We support the farming community in business and in the broader context.

In our area people are very suspicious of letting out land due to the difficulty landowners have had with some tenants and the increasing rights tenants have.

We feel the proposed changes will make this worse. 1991 tenancies are out-dated and the legislation around them is getting more and more complex. It could in some cases be a positive move for farming if landowners have the option to take their land back in hand when the tenant retires however to ask landowners to basically buy their own land again, from the tenant is not going to be affordable for ordinary Scottish citizens. The alternative is the tenant gets paid to assign the 1991 tenancy to someone else. Apart from the fact this is very one sided, I am sure landowners that live on the property would like a say in who is working their farm and on their property.

Tenant farmers often have more than one farm, there are occasions where tenants also own a farm and therefore would have the opportunity to sell, pass on or rent out their own farm at retiral.

Unfortunately we feel we these proposals do not look forward but look backwards, it seems that they will not strengthen the tenanted sector in the long run but weaken it. Landowners will not be encouraged to rent out land under these ever changing conditions.