



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01124

Name of petitioner

Louise Robertson on behalf of League Against Cruel Sports

Petition title

Banning the manufacture, sale, possession and use of all snares

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to amend the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to introduce provisions to ban the manufacture, sale, possession and use of all snares.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

All groups involved have taken part in intensive campaigning now for many years on this issue. The League and Advocates campaigned in 2003 for a complete ban during the passage of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill. When these amendments failed in Committee, the organisations lobbied for a consultation to be issued examining the future of the use of snares in Scotland. During this time a postcard campaign and petition to Ross Finnie, the then Environment Minister was launched.

Two and a half years after the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 passed through the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Executive issued a consultation. This closed in February 2007. The principal petitioners responded calling for a ban. (Full consultation responses are attached) Since then several MSPs, including Sarah Boyack, Elaine Murray, Kenneth Gibson and Irene Oldfather, have put down Parliamentary Questions asking when a decision on this issue will be made. Ministers have been made aware of our concern that snaring continues, with the inevitable consequence that animals continue to suffer.

Petition background information

The aim of this petition is to highlight the widespread public support for a ban on snaring and ultimately to achieve a complete ban on the manufacture, sale, possession and use of all snares in Scotland. We believe that snares are cruel, indiscriminate traps and it is unacceptable that they are being used to capture and kill Scotland's animals.

We hope to achieve either primary legislation or else an Order under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended for Scotland by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004) prohibiting the manufacture, sale, possession and use of all snares in Scotland.

The reasons for doing so are:

- Snares are cruel and cause terrible suffering
- Snares are indiscriminate traps that catch non-target (including protected wild species, farmed animals and pets) as well as target animals
- Snares are unnecessary
- Scotland is one of only a handful of countries in Europe that still permits the use of snares
- The use of snares in Scotland may be illegal under European conservation legislation

Self-locking snares are banned in Scotland under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. In 2003/4, the Scottish Parliament reviewed some of the legislation regarding snaring in Scotland while considering the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act. Many individuals and organisations including Advocates and the League called for a total ban on snares. Ministers undertook instead to propose a wide range of technical amendments at a later date. For example, with specific reference to snares, orders under section 11(3E) of the 1981 Act could outlaw “articles of a type” or “circumstances in which articles of that type” are illegal. We believe that the Act thereby provides powers for Ministers to make an Order banning snares.

The former Scottish Executive issued a consultation paper in November 2006. The consultation offered various options, including a total ban on snares and a set of technical amendments such as identification tags, compulsory use of fixed stops, and a prohibition on drag snares. Advocates and the League submitted separate detailed responses calling first for a complete ban, but also offering views on the amendments if a complete ban was not to be introduced.

The results of the consultation, released in August 2007, showed 70 per cent of a total of 247 responses favoured a total ban. An opinion poll commissioned by the League in 2007 showed that only 19 per cent of people in Scotland were aware that snares are still legal and 75 per cent of people thought they should be banned.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/PE01124>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

NO

How many signatures have you collected so far?

7988

Closing date for collecting signatures online

N/A

Comments to stimulate online discussion

