

Scottish Parliament (Thursday 24th February)

(1) Motion for debate on Thursday 24th February 10.30am:

*S2M-2463 Patrick Harvie: Identity Cards That the Parliament notes the Identity Cards Bill currently being considered by the Westminster Parliament; is concerned at the lack of time devoted to the scrutiny of this Bill, which has left important questions unanswered over how the identity card scheme will work in practice; believes the proposals to be flawed on political, technical and financial grounds; is concerned that the national identity card and database offer an ineffective response to problems of security and fraud and pose an unacceptable threat to civil liberties; notes that the current cost estimate for the scheme is 5.5 billion and that further escalation of this cost is expected; rejects the Prime Ministers belief, stated on 1 December 2004 in the House of Commons, that "it is legitimate and right, in this day and age, to ask people to carry identity cards" which appears to go far beyond the current scope of the Bill and would require the consent of the Scottish Parliament; welcomes the Scottish Executives position that identity cards will not be required to allow access to devolved public services, and calls on the Executive to make a full statement on the intended use of the identity database by devolved institutions.

Supported by: Robin Harper*, Mark Ballard*

(2) Whilst Charles Clarke has said that "Some 50 million a year is claimed illegally from the benefits system alone through the use of false identities" (and unclear on what basis this figure is arrived at) yet the total level of unclaimed benefit (Income Support, Minimum Income Guarantee, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit & income-based Jobseekers Allowance) in 2002/03 was between 3 300 million and 6 260 million according to the DWP whilst the level of non-takeup for non-pensioner income support and JSA is between 860million and 2140 million. (see p3 of http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/income_analysis/NSPR080205.pdf).