I refer to the call for comment with respect to the above Bill.

It was my sincere hope with the onset of devolution, which I had supported, that the Scottish Executive would serve the interests of the people of Scotland, and recognise that these might not mirror the aims of the governing administration in London whatever its political make up. I was clearly naive.

It is astounding that that the Scottish Executive should so slavishly embrace the adoption by the Department of Constitutional Affairs of the Clementi report which itself was prompted entirely by the failings of the Law Society of England and Wales regarding the regulation of the solicitors’ profession in their jurisdiction.

There is a distinction between the regulation of the profession in Scotland and in the remainder of Britain. The model operation of the Complaint’s handling system in Scotland by the Law Society of Scotland should be a matter of pride, as should the independence of the legal profession and the Scottish Legal System whose unique character will be jeopardised by these proposals.

Please recall the lesson of the ill conceived overhaul of family support payments. The pursuit of equitable arrangements on behalf of individuals represented by their own solicitors, in many instances funded by the State was replaced by an Executive body the Child Support Agency now a by-word for farcical inefficiency and dire waste of public funds. I fear the same consequence were the Executive to needlessly replace an expert, independently scrutinised system having equally balanced lay in put.

There must be a better use of scarce resources than the ‘fixing of something that is not broken’.

I am a member of both the Law Societies to which I refer. The Law Society of Scotland has not lamely agreed to relinquish its twin statutory responsibilities to the profession and to the public; quite rightly as it has not failed in either duty. For this it deserves your support in preserving the distinct character of Scotland’s private and commercial legal landscape. Do not destroy this by the introduction of this Bill.