I am writing to register my personal views and objection to the LPLA Bill insofar as it aims to set up a costly, discriminatory and bureaucratic quango in a move which is out of all proportion to any problems identified. I am a solicitor with 20 years experience. My experience has been gained both in London and in Scotland. Some of my activity has been in other countries.

I do not think anyone would deny that high standards are and should be demanded of solicitors by their regulatory overseers and that, with any standards, they are not always met. However, I understand that it is in very few matters or transactions or pieces of client work that there is a problem, less so a problem which demands that the State intervene with a costly and bureaucratic system of oversight on top of the improved regulation of the Law Society of Scotland. This is a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

A quango appointed by Ministers would be more inclined to respond to political or media pressure than to arrive at a just solution based on a fair assessment of the facts. This quango will be financed by part of the commercial sector, the legal community. Indeed, it will be financed by a levy on solicitors and a payment for each “eligible” complaint. So even, in substance, ridiculous complaints would cost a legitimate practitioner several hundreds if not thousands of pounds. I have some ready examples which have cost a lot of time. Irony of ironies, there is an inherent conflict in that deeming a complaint “eligible” allows the quango an immediate payment from the solicitor. What an excellent way to raise money! And if complaints go down, the levy goes up. No problem.

The powers to award compensation are another great attraction for the complainant but have little to do with fairness. If the Executive wants to establish a compensation culture, it is going the right way about it.

Those who suffer from failures in service deserve proper compensation. No one denies that. The proposals will, however, be excellent fodder for some individuals. It will be a significant cost to the legal profession and its clients. Remember also that the legal profession is a competitive profession which will win business or lose business on being competitive. We compete with businesses in England and abroad. This proposal will do nothing for standards and will reduce competitiveness. What assessment of the effects on competition has taken place? None, but that is not unusual.

This is a perfect example of an expansionist public sector “solution” to deal with perceived problems in what is regarded as the private sector. That is all we need; another 60 people (or more) on the payroll producing for the economy…very little.

The proposed regime is discriminatory. Solicitors will be subject to this inadequate (in human rights terms) regime. Other non-regulated providers will be free of these costs. Anyone who regards that as a good result should examine whether their approach to this is distorted by prejudice or misconceptions.

Remember also that the legal profession is a source of employment for graduates in law, IT, marketing and a source of employment for many others. What should we advise our law graduates? Go South? Remaining in Scotland you will be subjected to a discriminatory system of levies, a bureaucratic and overweening complaints body with an incentive to encourage complaints. Your income will be funding a self sustaining quango, one of an increasing number.

What about the consumer? Any economist will confirm that this will add to legal costs.

The salaries and pensions of the lucky ones to benefit from this proposal (the 60 or more civil servants of the quango) will be costing us long into the future.

These views are personal to the writer.