

**What's Happening at Holyrood?
Anderson Strathern Parliamentary Bulletin
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Scottish Government has announced its intention to introduce the following 11 Bills in the forthcoming parliamentary session.

Abolition of Bridge Tolls (Scotland) Bill:

This Bill seeks to abolish the tolls on the Forth Road and Tay Bridges. The Government aims to provide a boost to the economies of Tayside and Fife and ensure the Scottish road network and its users are treated consistently and fairly. This Bill was introduced on 3 September 2007.

Interest on Debt and Damages Bill:

Building on recommendations from the Scottish Law Commission, this Bill will seek to develop fair rules for the application of interest rates to payments of debt and damages by bringing in a right to claim interest, from the time when a sum of money becomes due by one person to another.

Budget Bill 2008:

This Bill will be introduced in January 2008 and will give the Government authority to spend, and provide a transparent framework for the spending of, resources from the Scottish consolidated fund.

Creative Scotland Bill:

In a bid to strengthen Scotland's creative sector, and generate further jobs and income for the economy, this Bill will provide the authority for establishment of a new cultural development body to replace the Scottish Arts Council.

Graduate Endowment (Abolition) Bill:

This Bill will abolish the Graduate Endowment. The Government plans to abolish the fee from 2007 onwards in order to benefit students who currently pay around £2,300 after graduation.

Public Health (Scotland) Bill:

This Bill aims to provide a comprehensive modernisation of Scotland's public health legislation which currently dates as far back as 1897. The Bill seeks to extend current laws to include action for protection against biological, chemical and radiological contamination, including more powers of quarantine.

Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Bill:

Should Glasgow's bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games be successful, this Bill will provide the framework required for the games to set new standards, and will include provisions for facilities to get Scottish people physically active.

Local Health Bill:

A Bill will be introduced in order to give greater patient and community involvement in how local health services are delivered, including through participation in direct elections to Scotland's Health Boards.

Judiciary (Scotland) Bill:

This Bill aims to modernise the organisation of Scotland's judiciary. The judiciary will be given greater power over the Scottish Court Service and the Bill will seek to put the Judicial Appointments Board on a statutory footing.

Rape and Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill:

This Bill will provide reform in this area of law in the light of the Scottish Law Commission's report into this issue and the ongoing concern at Scotland's rape conviction rate.

Flooding Prevention (Scotland) Bill:

This Bill will seek to modernise the current approach to flood protection with the aim of adopting a more flexible and sustainable approach. A consultation will be held on several issues, including how to fund small-scale defences locally, improve flood risk information and ensure that management plans are produced for all high-risk areas.