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### **Abertay Law Student Lisa Keogh Cleared of Misconduct**

June 9<sup>th</sup> -- Lisa Keogh, the law student at the University of Abertay under investigation for saying women have vaginas, are weaker than men and shouldn't have to compete against transwomen in contact sports, has been cleared of all charges.

Last night, she received a letter from the Chair of the Student Disciplinary Board, which had been tasked with deciding whether she should be punished for her views, informing her that all the complaints against her had been dismissed.

This is another victory for the Free Speech Union, the non-partisan, mass membership public interest body that stands up for the speech rights of its members and campaigns for free speech more widely. Lisa is a member of the FSU and has been supported by the organisation throughout her two-month ordeal.

After the FSU took up her case, Lisa made headlines around the world and was raised in both the House of Commons and House of Lords. SNP MP Joanna Cherry QC, Vice Chair of the Westminster Equalities and Human Rights Committee, was heavily critical of the University's approach, noting that Lisa had been placed under investigation for stating a biological fact.

**Lisa Keogh** commented:

"Yesterday I received a letter from Abertay University dismissing all the complaints made against me. This is a victory. As overjoyed as I am about this decision, I am saddened that I went through this at such a critical time in my university career. The very end of my period at Abertay is now tarnished with these bad memories and I worry that my final grades will have been affected by this. I will not feel comfortable attending any graduation event.

"Although Abertay has decided I'm innocent of all charges, the ordeal I have been through has been a punishment in itself. I hope that Abertay University can learn from this experience and not put other students through a similar ordeal just for voicing their opinions. While I may no longer be a student at the University, it is still vital to me that others have the opportunity to take part in lively open debates without worrying about being punished afterwards. If Abertay just carries on as before, this journey will have been for no good reason."

"Although Abertay denies this, it was my gender critical views that led to me being investigated by the University and this should never have happened. I know the University has a duty to investigate all complaints, but to draw this process out for two months while I was taking my final exams was needlessly cruel. The University should put a process in place that will enable it to judge what complaints need to be investigated and which ones can be dismissed immediately because they're vexatious and politically motivated.

"I always knew the complaints made against me were groundless and now the Student Disciplinary Board has confirmed that. I was targeted because of my gender critical views – it was a modern day witch hunt. My time studying law at Abertay has made me aware that there are legal avenues open to me to stop this

kind of thing happening to other women. No woman should face discrimination in the way I have because she believes in sex-based rights.

"I want to say a special thank you to the Free Speech Union for helping me through this stressful time, in particular Fraser Hudghton, the Case Management Director, who has been on hand at all hours to answer my calls and navigate me through this. I also want to say a massive thank you to the SNP MP Joanna Cherry who is someone who I look up to. The fact that she had my back throughout gave me the strength to carry on.

**Joanna Cherry QC MP** added:

"I'm pleased at this outcome. But Lisa should never have been put through this ordeal in the first place and the University should review its free speech and equality policies to make sure that future students are not subject to the stress of spurious complaints nor discriminated against, harassed or victimised for their beliefs."

**Toby Young, General Secretary of the FSU**, said:

"I'm delighted that the complaints against Lisa have been dismissed, but the University should not have taken two months to reach this conclusion. It should have been obvious that the complaints against her were due to her gender critical views, not the manner in which she expressed them. In a seminar on gender, feminism and the law there should be room for a range of views, from militant trans activism to traditional feminism.

"Lisa deserves a huge amount of credit for standing up for herself. The path of least resistance would have been to apologise and renounce her heretical belief, but instead she fought her corner. Thanks to her courage, there is now space for a broader range of views at Abertay – it is no longer taboo to defend sex-based women's rights.

"Lisa is one of dozens of people with gender critical views whom we've defended at the Free Speech Union. When I set up the organisation, I thought most of our members would be male, pale and stale conservatives like me, but we've become the go-to organisation for feminists under fire and that makes me very proud. Free speech benefits everyone, not just people on my side of the political divide, and the only way we can defend it is if people of widely different views make common cause.

"I would say to anyone who finds themselves in the same predicament as Lisa – isolated and alone, attacked for your heretical views and feeling the full weight of a powerful institution bearing down on you – please get in touch with the Free Speech Union. We may be able to help."

**-ENDS-**