

## **Proposal for Members' Statements**

### **Response from the Democratic Unionist Party**

The DUP remains to be convinced of the merits of amending the Standing Orders to allow members of make statements without having to meet the threshold for current instruments such as urgent oral questions or matters of the day.

In our view the mechanisms currently in place alongside the other opportunities for raising topical issues on the floor of the Assembly provide Members with opportunities to raise issues.

In general, no provision for topical statements is provided for in any of the other legislatures in the United Kingdom. The closest template is in Wales where a written opinion of no more than 100 words can be submitted in the names of a group of members.

Many questions arise as to how any new member statement process would work that would on the one hand not lead to repetition where such matters could be raised at other points in the day's proceedings whilst equally not so lowering the threshold that procedurally matters of little relevance and importance are given a similar standing on the floor of the Assembly with for example a Matter of the Day or an Urgent Oral Question.

It follows that any proposed changes to Standing Orders would need to be precise and clearly defined and we will want to further explore these issues at the Procedures Committee to determine whether in our view they are workable or beneficial to the proceedings of the Assembly.