

Sinn Féin submission to the Committee Stage of the Assembly Opposition Bill

The Fresh Start Agreement published on November 17 2015 makes provision for parties elected to the Assembly to form an Opposition.

These provisions do not impinge upon the principles of equality, inclusiveness and representativeness underpinned in the Good Friday Agreement and subsequently in the St Andrew's and Hillsborough Agreements.

The provisions for Opposition outlined in the Fresh Start Agreement do not require any legislative process.

The Fresh Start provisions for an official opposition is the best and most appropriate approach on this issue. Sinn Féin therefore supports the provisions for an official opposition as set out in the Fresh Start Agreement.

In relation to the Assembly Opposition Bill, throughout Committee Stage Sinn Féin has outlined our concerns that aspects of the Bill can and do impact on the principles of equality, inclusiveness and representativeness as set out in the Good Friday Agreement.

As Sinn Féin supports the provisions for Opposition in the Fresh Start Agreement we do not support the Assembly Opposition Bill and we intend to vote against it at Consideration Stage.