

From the Office of the Minister



Department of
**Enterprise, Trade
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Dear Patsy,

**WESTMINSTER ENTERPRISE BILL: SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER:
LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MOTION**

You will wish to be aware that the UK Government introduced to the House of Lords on 16 September 2015, their Enterprise Bill, which includes a range of measures which are intended to support the growth of enterprise in the UK, along with a number of additional powers and measures.

This Bill will allow for the establishment of a Small Business Commissioner, who's role is intended to empower small businesses to resolve disputes and avoid future issues by encouraging a culture change in how businesses deal with each other, promoting fair treatment for all. Having considered this in a NI context I am in favour of this measure being extended to Northern Ireland and I will seek the agreement of the Executive for a Legislative Consent Motion to the NI Assembly. A LCM is considered the most appropriate route to achieve this service for NI small businesses and ensure they are not unfairly disadvantaged with businesses elsewhere in the UK.

The Committee will be afforded the opportunity to fully consider the Legislative Consent Memorandum at a later date, prior to tabling a Motion.

You will also wish to be aware that another provision in the Bill is being considered by DFP which may require a Legislative Consent Motion. This relates to Public Sector Employment: Restrictions on Exit Payments.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan F. Bell

JONATHAN BELL MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment