

Response ID ANON-PYJC-FRHQ-7

Submitted to Sign Language Bill - Call for Evidence

Submitted on 2025-05-08 15:42:55

Consent and introduction

What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

What is your email address?

Email:

[REDACTED]

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

[REDACTED]

Please confirm you have read the Northern Ireland Assembly's Committee privacy notice by clicking the button below.

I have read the privacy notice

Do you consent to your submission being published on the Committee's website and included in the Committee's report?

Yes, publish but with my personal information and any content that could be used to identify me redacted.

Clause 1

Do you feel Clause 1 goes far enough in formally recognising BSL and ISL as languages of Northern Ireland?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

Recognising a language formally is great but more detail needs to be included as to what this actually means. A language may be recognised but still not given the same precedence as the language used by the minority in the country.

Clause 2

Do you feel Clause 2 goes far enough in promoting the use of BSL and ISL and developing deaf culture?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

More needs to be specified as to the obligations of DFC and to how this will happen. With the best will in the world, classes will only be possible if the provision of Deaf SL tutors increases dramatically. Why would there need to be a line stating that there should be 'the general entitlement of individuals in the deaf community to use BSL or ISL?' Surely this is a matter of respect and is not necessary.

Are there any other approaches (apart from providing for the availability of classes) that could help to meet the objective of the greater use and understanding of BSL and ISL?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

Yes - ultimately BSL/ISL should be taught in schools so that there is early exposure to the 'language of need' for Deaf people, but again these classes need to be taught by qualified Deaf tutors so the training of such should be seen as a priority

Clause 3

Do you think the duty placed on prescribed organisations to make the information and services accessible to members of the deaf community is sufficient?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

There will always be 'get out clauses' or excuses relating to cost if the words 'reasonable' or 'prescribed organisations' are included. It is too vague and open to places no formal obligations on organisations to make services equal and accessible.

Clause 4

Do you support the approach taken by Clause 4?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

Prescribed organisations is insufficient - all organisations should have the same responsibility and if help is needed with funding then the government should step in.

Clause 5

Do you support the approach to consultation required in Clause 5?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

I absolutely disagree that one person or group who 'appear to be acting on behalf of the deaf community' is a good idea. This is in fact an extremely dangerous scenario and will seek to further undermine the needs of a diverse minority group who may already be unaware they can have a voice

Clause 6

Do you support the approach taken in this clause?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

I mostly agree with this except for the use of the word 'prescribed' organisations

Do you feel there is anything else this Clause should include?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

The words 'Legal obligation' are needed to truly protect individuals from any ambiguity which may arise

Clause 7

Do you support the provision for the Department for Communities to make regulations detailed in Clause 7?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

Yes and no to this - the last line is not satisfactory - if resources are an issue, the Government of our country needs to address the shortfall and ensure provision is made available. Nothing should come down to a question of money - Deaf people are among us, natives of NI and should be given the same rights as anyone else in the country.

Do you support the approach to consultation detailed in Clause 7?

Not Answered

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

Clause 8

Do you feel the level of consultation required in Clause 8 is sufficient?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

Again - one person or group will not represent the needs of a community

Clause 9

Do you think evaluating the impact of the Bill in a report every five years is an appropriate length of time?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

Realistically every 5 years seems reasonable

Clause 10

Do you support the creation of a scheme for accrediting BSL and ISL teachers?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box for entering additional information:

There is no need to re-invent the wheel. We already have a governing body (Signature) who regulate and lots of recognised and mapped routes to qualification throughout the UK for interpreters to train and qualify

Do you support the creation of a scheme for accrediting BSL and ISL interpreters?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

As above

Clause 11

Do you agree with the definition of the deaf community provided for in the Bill?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer. Please outline what people or groups you think should be included or excluded and why.

Text box for entering additional information:

I agree with this mostly except part (c) which I do not really understand or relate to

Clause 12

Do you agree with the definition of BSL and ISL provided for in the Bill?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer. If you think there are any aspects missing, please outline what you think should be included.

Text box for entering additional information:

Clause 13

Do you agree with the definition of "everyday reliance" provided in the Bill?

Yes

Please give details to support your answer. If you think there are any aspects missing, please outline what you think should be included.

Text box for entering additional information:

Any other comments

Is there anything which you expected the Bill to make provision for which has not been included in the Bill?

No

Please give details to support your answer.

Text box to enter additional details:

If you have any other comments in relation to the Bill please tell us here.

Text box to enter additional details: