

Brendan Mullan
Chair

Date: 23 April 2026

Ms K O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee for Justice
Room 345
Parliament Buildings
Stormont

Dear Kathy

CRIMINAL JUSTICE (SENTENCING ETC) BILL

I am replying to your e-mail of 31 March 2026 regarding the Criminal Justice (Sentencing etc) Bill.

As a Board we called for the current legislation regarding penalties for attacks and assaults to be reviewed to reflect the real-life risks and dangers police officers, and indeed all emergency service colleagues, can face in their every-day service to the community. Regrettably, figures show that officer assaults are no longer isolated incidents and as such, the Board welcomes the provisions incorporated into the Bill regarding assaults and attacks on public service workers.

The Board also supports the position that the new offence and statutory aggravator should apply to all those workers assaulted while providing a public service, providing services to the public or performing a public duty.

It is also noted that the Bill gives consideration to sentencing changes for a number of serious road traffic offences. The Board is responsible for oversight of Policing Plan Indicator 2.6, which measures the steps taken by PSNI to contribute to safer roads through effective enforcement, partnership working, and harm reduction initiatives.

Given the increasing numbers of deaths and serious injuries on our roads, it is important that the deterrent for these most serious offences reflects the devastating consequences of such incidents.

I hope the above comments are of assistance to the Committee in its review of the Bill.

Yours sincerely

Brendan Mullan
Chair

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