

Response ID ANON-6P8U-5M8R-Y

Submitted to School Uniforms (Trousers) Bill
Submitted on 2026-08-23 23:40:45

Introduction

1 Please confirm that you have read the Privacy Notice for Northern Ireland Assembly Committees by clicking the button below.

Yes, I have read the Privacy Notice.:

Yes

2 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.

3 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

4 What is your email address?

Email:

[REDACTED]

5 Are you responding as:

A school

Please provide further details here, if relevant.:

6 What is your gender?

Male

Purpose of the Bill

7 Do you agree with the purpose of the Bill?

No

Do you have any further comments?:

We would request an exemption from this proposed change in the law being applied to our Schools:

1. The distinction in dress and appearance between boys and girls has been a point of our School ethos since the formation of our Christian Schools. This is reflective of the denominational position that dress is modest and appropriate. Distinction in dress between males and females is carried over into our contracts of employment as an 'Occupational Requirement' for teaching staff. To permit pupils to do something which is contrary to our ethos and employment requirements will only create confusion within our schools and go contrary to our Biblical ethos and sincerely held beliefs.

2. Our school parents, have historically and do presently support the school ethos on the matter of dress and appearance. In over 40 years of existence no one has ever raised this as an issue of concern. This is one of the reasons why Christian parents desire to send their pupils to our schools. They desire for these distinctions to be maintained.

3. It is acknowledged in Article 2, Protocol 1, of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms that ...In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

8 Do you foresee any unintended consequences of the Bill?

Yes

If you have answered 'yes', please provide details:

Adversely affecting exemptions religious organisations have.

Historically, exemptions have been given recognising the Biblical ethos and sincerely held views of those within religious organisations. I enclose a few examples.

(i) The Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976 as specifically amended by Sex Discrimination (Amendment of Legislation) Regulations 2008, (see section 35ZA Excluded matters).

(ii) The Sex Discrimination Gender Reassignment Regulations Northern Ireland 1999, (see section 5).

(iii) The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 and The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) (Amendment) Regulations

(Northern Ireland) 2006, (see regulation 16).

Clauses of the Bill

Clause 1

9 Do you think Clause 1 will have the effects that are anticipated?

I believe Clause 1 won't have the anticipated effects.

If you have answered that Clause 1 will only have some of the anticipated effects, or won't have the anticipated effects, please provide details.:

I am against Clause 1 because of the overall impact it will have on Independent Christian Schools

Clause 2

10 It is appropriate for the DE to also publish its guidelines on school uniforms.

Strongly disagree

Do you have any further comments? :

I am against this obligation because of the overall impact it will have on Independent Christian Schools

Clause 3

11 Do you have any comments on this Clause?

Yes

If you have answered 'yes', please provide details.:

The State system can set its own standards and guidelines. I don't believe it should be intruding into areas where it affects religious schools which outside this system.

Financial effects of the Bill

12 The financial effects of the Bill will be minimal. (See Paragraphs 19 and 20 of the Explanatory and Financial Memorandum.)

Neither agree nor disagree

Do you have any further comments? :

Additional Comments and Observations

13 Additional comments and observations

Comment Box :