

Response ID [REDACTED]

Submitted to Regional Balance Bill

Submitted on [REDACTED]

Introduction

1 What is your name?

name:

Steve Frazer

2 What is your email address?

email address:

[REDACTED]

3 Are you providing a submission on behalf of an organisation or business?

Yes

If yes, please provide the name of the organisation or business below:

City of Derry Airport

Consent

4 Please confirm that you have read the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee's Privacy Notice by clicking the button below.

yes:

Yes

5 How would you like your submission to be published?

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

Regional Balance Bill

Clause 1 - Strategic Regional Balance Framework

6 Do regional economic and related disparities need legislation in order for them to be addressed appropriately?

Yes

7 Should the obligation on the development of a Strategic Regional Balance Framework sit with the Executive?

Yes

8 Does the Bill correctly set out what should be in the Strategic Regional Balance Framework including: the roles of Departments; the mechanisms to address disparity; the criteria and methodology for assessing regional disparities; the setting of targets and milestones; the use of cross-border data; the identification of a baseline year etc.

No

9 Does the Bill correctly set out the consultation process for the development of the Strategic Regional Balance Framework, its publication and revision?

No

10 Do you have any other comments on Clause 1 or suggested amendments for this clause?

Clause 1:

Clause 2 - Reporting, Review and Support Functions

11 Is it reasonable and sufficient to require all Departments in developing, adopting, implementing or revising any policy, strategy or plan, to have due regard to the need to reduce regional disparity and to the Strategic Regional Balance Framework?

Yes

12 Is it reasonable and sufficient to require all Departments to exercise their functions, so far as is reasonably practicable, in a manner calculated to contribute to the outcomes and targets set in the Strategic Regional Balance Framework?

Yes

13 Do you have any other comments on Clause 2 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 2 :

Clause 3 - Annual Reporting

14 Do you agree that all Departments should be required to report annually as to how they have reduced regional disparities in the preceding 12 month period?

Yes

15 Do you have any other comments on Clause 3 or suggested amendments for this clause?

If no, please explain below:

Clause 4 - Annual Reporting

16 Do you agree that the Department for the Economy should be required to report annually and the Minister make a related statement as to how all Departments have reduced regional disparities in the preceding 12 month period?

Yes

17 Do you have any other comments on Clause 4 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 4:

Clause 5 - Reviewing the Framework

18 Do you agree that the operation and effectiveness of the Framework should be revised by the Executive every 5 years?

Yes

19 Do you have any other comments on Clause 5 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 5:

Clause 6 - Guidance and Research

20 Do you agree that the Department for the Economy should provide guidance and information and undertake, commission or support research on regional disparities?

Yes

21 Do you have any other comments on Clause 6 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 6:

Clause 7 - Defining regional disparity and regions

22 Do you agree with how regional disparity may be defined by the Bill?

Yes

23 Should regional disparity indices be specified in the Bill?

Yes

24 What other indices should be used to define regional disparity?

clause 7 :

25 Do you agree with how the Bill may define a region within Northern Ireland?

Yes

26 Do you have any other comments on Clause 7 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 7:

Clause 8 - Commencement and Short Title

27 Do you agree that the provisions of this legislation should be commenced immediately after Royal Assent?

Yes

28 Do you have any other comments on Clause 8 or suggested amendments for this clause?

clause 7:

Proposed Additions and Amendments

29 Please provide information on any other potential amendments that you feel would enhance the Bill and the rationale for those.

Information on any potential amendments:

In a cross border region like Derry and the Northwest combining access to public services like health and transport are vital to the region, therefore mechanisms to support the infrastructure associated with those services is key to retaining and improving. City of Derry airport is one such example where the operational s loss making model is supported due to the significant wider regional economic benefits and maintaining a vital part of any growing regions ecosystem (air connectivity) particularly when on an island. Whilst UKG policy is largely one size fits all, NI's powers remain limited due to that industry related policy being reserved, whereas ROI operate a Regional airports program which recognizes the geography and the economic importance of supporting air connectivity. In a border region our shared asset (CODA) would benefit from a reciprocal approach (both governments) to ensure both operational and capital investment continues to serve the regions growth plans. We should seek formal recognition that we have have shared infrastructural assets and look to jointly support them to deliver their full potential regardless of postcode.

Additionally, greater progress on proportional decentralization is needed for all government departments and organizations to decrease the capital centric legacy affecting jobs, decision making, infrastructure, transport, population and the wider mindset (particularly from UKG / mainland decision makes that Belfast is NI, box ticked). For organizations big enough (Invest NI & TNI come to mind), there is a clear proportion of their available man hours which must be focused on the Northwest as they are working for Team NI, why would that resource be based in the capital rather than in the region.

Additional Comments

30 Please provide any additional comments on the Bill you feel should be considered.

additional comments:

see q29, also targets & measures are vitally important to demonstrate gaps are being closed and imbalance is less, reflecting on just NW YoY stats to determine success must also show comparative growth in other regions and brave policy decisions from departments charged with growth to prioritize appropriately. Sometimes a pure volume increase is easier to achieve elsewhere, versus the effort and time required to achieve a similar or more modest increase elsewhere (but significantly greater impact could be delivered within the imbalanced regions), to achieve that more consistently, resources on the ground in those regions dealing directly and daily with stakeholders to fully understand the capabilities and needs is essential.

Almost done...

31 If you provide an email address you will be sent a receipt and a link to a PDF copy of your response.

email:

[REDACTED]