

Response ID ANON-3A5J-4M8J-P

Submitted to Display of Flags and Emblems - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-07-29 17:12:32

Introduction

1 Confirmation of having read the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee's Privacy Notice.

I confirm that I have read the privacy notice.

2 What is your name?

Name:
Jeff Faulkner

3 What is your email address?

Email:

4 If you are providing a submission on behalf of an organisation or business, please state its name.

Organisation:
N/a

5 The Committee for Infrastructure has agreed to publish all responses as part of the survey results. If you would like to have your survey results anonymised and for us not to publish your name or organisation, please indicate so here.

I am content for my information, including details of my name and organisation, to be published in the survey results.

Clause 1: Removal of flags or emblems in the public interest

6 Do you agree with Clause 1 of the Bill?

Yes

7 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The PSNI have stated that the Department for infrastructure are responsible for the removal of unwanted flags and emblems and the Dfi should do this. The current situation is that it is illegal to erect flags and emblems under existing legislation but no organisation is willing to do this for fear of intimidation or violence against staff members the Department for infrastructure should be legislated to remove unwanted flags and emblems with the support and protection of the PSNI. If the Department for infrastructure does not remove the unwanted flags and emblems it risks residents in the affected areas taking action to remove the flags and emblems themselves with the attendant risks {Community friction, conflict and perhaps public disorder}.

Clause 2: Sensitive places

8 Do you agree with Clause 2 of the Bill?

Yes

9 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I personally have no issue with communities celebrating their culture within their own areas {Where this has traditionally taken place} and if this includes flags/emblems or symbols that is acceptable BUT this should not encroach into areas that do not want flags/emblems or symbols, areas that are mixed shared and diverse should not have any culture imposed upon them simply because a community decides to expand its territorial boundaries. It is clear from social media posts and comments that some community groups have been using flags/emblems and symbols to send a message to an area or a particular grouping that they are not welcome in a particular area - a message that is occasionally reinforced by some politicians in unguarded comments, posts or statements for their own purposes. I reiterate that communities should not have a culture imposed upon them and should be free to remain natural and culture free.

Clause 3: Procedure for / notification of, or giving views on, flags or emblems

10 Do you agree with Clause 3 of the Bill?

No

11 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I do not agree with this clause - this will effectively give the Dfi a mechanism to stall and delay the removal of unwanted Flags/emblems and symbols. The legislation needs to be clear and unambiguous, if legislation is open to interpretation or manipulation you may as well not have it.

Clause 4: Code of Practice

12 Do you agree with Clause 4 of the Bill?

Yes

13 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

In my view a code of practice is a bit 'whishy washy' it needs to be a statements of what is allowed and what is not allowed to be done with regard to erecting Flags/emblems and symbols and state the avenues for grievances and complaints.

Clause 5: Offence of obstructing the Department in removal of flag or emblem

14 Do you agree with Clause 5 of the Bill?

Yes

15 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

This should be an enforceable deterrent with clear lines of responsibility enforce.

Clause 6: Request for assistance from police

16 Do you agree with Clause 6 of the Bill?

Yes

17 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Yes Dfi Staff who feel there is a threat of violence or intimidation have a right to expect support and protection from the PSNI and this support should be available.

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Yes

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Again the interpretations should be clear and unambiguous.

Clause 8: Commencement

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

No

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Too 'Whishy washy' as soon as practicable is shorthand giving political parties an reason to delay if it suits them it should be 12 months after this date. The first of January 2028 is also too long it needs to be sooner or is this a way of kicking this into the long grass {i.e. Until after the Stormont elections in 2027}

Clause 9: Short title

22 Do you agree with Clause 9 of the Bill?

Yes

23 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

What is the short title ?