

Response ID ANON-3D4T-2A8W-1

Submitted to Display of Flags and Emblems - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-09-15 16:47:28

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:

[REDACTED]

3 What is your email address?

Email:

[REDACTED]

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

Organisation:

[REDACTED]

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 would like my views to be anonymous and understand that my name and organisation details will be withheld, along with any identifiers in the response, but my views will still be published.

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

6 Do you agree with Clause 1 of the Bill?

No

7 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

There will be no agreement on what is in the public interest or respect for any definition of it that the bill might include. People conflate the public interest with their own interest. What one person considers to be in the public interest will be anathema to another.

Clause 2: Sensitive places

8 Do you agree with Clause 2 of the Bill?

No

9 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

As with public interest, this clause will fall apart over the definition of what is a sensitive place.

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:

This clause just provides another platform for conflict between those who want flags and emblems in a given place and those who don't.

Clause 4: Code of Practice

12 Do you agree with Clause 4 of the Bill?

No

13 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I do not think the assembly would be able to agree a reasonable code of practice. It will just provide another subject for an intemperate debate.

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

14 Do you agree with Clause 5 of the Bill?

Unsure

15 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

This would depend on whether it is possible to draft a workable bill - I don't believe it is. And it would depend on the ability of the PSNI to enforce it. They seem to be quite busy already and their time might be better spent on other matters such as reducing the death toll on the roads.

Clause 6: Request for assistance from police

16 Do you agree with Clause 6 of the Bill?

No

17 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

See answer to the previous question. There are plenty of more pressing matters for the police to deal with.

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

No

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The major problem with this bill is its dependence on definitions on which there will be no agreement, rather they will be another source of ongoing strife.

Clause 8: Commencement

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

No

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

This bill is, no doubt, a well-intentioned attempt to deal with an obvious problem. It is attempting the impossible and I believe there is no chance that it will achieve its objective. It cannot come up with definitions acceptable across the communities. It would just increase - if that is possible - polarisation in the Assembly and in wider society. Learn from the attempts to deal with Irish language signs and parading. My view is that the Bill should be abandoned. The first principle of legislation should be to avoid making worse the problem it sets out to deal with.

Clause 9: Short title

22 Do you agree with Clause 9 of the Bill?

Unsure

23 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The title matters little.