

Response ID ANON-4F2R-4Y4D-3

Submitted to Display of Flags and Emblems - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-09-14 16:56:12

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:
Charles Brannigan

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:

It is essential if a fair and equitable society in Northern Ireland is to be achieved that control of displays of this material is regulated and enforced. The purpose of these displays is largely to give offence and this is often defended as legitimate expressions of "culture." The result is the continual disruption of the social order with progress diverted and disrupted in a never ending cycle. It is important that those who support provocative displays for narrow political ends are called out for what they are. There is no prospect of a successful political system while this situation is allowed to persist.

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:

I disagree with Clause as it will allow debate as to what may or may not be a sensitive place. I could be argued that anywhere in N.I. might be a "sensitive" place. So of course the abuse would continue while a pointless debate rages with the usual suspects ensuring that no resolution can happen. Who decides what place is sensitive? The police? The Parades Commission? Must a map of sensitive places be drawn up? I cant help feeling that this course will lead to more contention. The necessary judgements and appropriate response must be capable of being taken as soon as possible when the issue is reported. Time is important to prevent the opposition to bed in and frustrate the appropriate action.

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

10 Do you agree with Clause 3 of the Bill?

Yes

11 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I agree with the clause as it would seem to be a pragmatic attempt to identify those who intend to comply with the conditions, as opposed to those who do not.

Of course this obsession of a significant section of the population with this type of display, usually exaggerated beyond reason has over time become "normal." It is not normal. It does not happen in any other part of the United Kingdom. It is not acceptable in a democratic society and it leads the reasonable people in this place to question the entire basis of what is referred to as "our culture."

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:

A Code of Practice is of course the necessary instrument to allow the purposes of the Bill to be brought onto effect. it must provide the clearest possible guidance to the agencies which will be tasked with it's implementation and enforcement.

It must be applicable in the widest possible circumstances where these issues may occur.

It must be proof against meretricious legal actions.

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:

It is obvious that appropriate penalties must apply to those who attempt to obstruct the removal of the offending material. Assured action by the authorised contractors/ police/special security personnel who may be empowered by the terms of this bill will ensure that, while resistance by the lawbreakers in the early stages of enforcement can be expected, reluctance to suffer the consequences will eventually win out.

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:

Of course it is to be expected that the PSNI will have a major responsibility in providing support to personnel tasked with carrying out the necessary action.

As I have suggested above consideration might be given to some special security group to deal with these issues. Such a group may be drawn from existing PSNI to be called upon as required.

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Yes

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

No comment

Clause 8: Commencement

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

Yes

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

No comment

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:

No comment