

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:

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?

Yes, Unsure

7 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I agree with the Clause in principle, especially if it works to represent the views of local residents without endangering them. However, any implementation needs to consider unintended consequences. For example, if it is in public interest to remove a flag or emblem but the PSNI determine it unsafe to do so, where does the Department's position in this lie and can it be guaranteed that the safety of departmental officials will be protected?

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:

This bill should be applicable to sensitive places and shared communal places, simply for the fact that they are sensitive and shared. These places are often used by residents of a multitude of different communities, who are subjected to operating amongst flags which do not represent them or their beliefs. This does not refer solely to Union Jacks, Ulster flags and Irish tricolours, but also to paramilitary, religious and flags of other states. To give one example, the Connswater retail area of East Belfast is currently covered in an array of flags, one of which is the flag of Israel. These flags are relatively new - despite Israel's ongoing genocide - and they persist against the wishes of the businesses and shoppers in the area. The businesses are now operating under fear, after having removed the flags and being met with intimidation to staff. I hope this bill will work to rectify this situation which can be seen in many parts of Northern Ireland, where a loud minority who appear overnight and in masks attempt to control local narratives and sentiments.

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:

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:

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:

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:

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Unsure

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Flags and emblems are a sensitive matter to many in Northern Ireland. Therefore, given the very nature of the bill some degree of interpretation will be natural and unavoidable. However, this should be kept tight and bound by the terms in the agreed upon code of practice. In an instance where interpretation is too vast and unagreeable, there should be an oversight body, such as an ombudsman or commission to independently review complex cases.

Clause 8: Commencement

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

Yes

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

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: