

Submitted to Display of Flags and Emblems - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-07-25 12:44:40

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:

Most flags of a political/sectarian nature are positioned in a public place to mark out territory for a specific faction. Our society needs to free itself from such attitudes and actions. While most people do not want to sow (or maintain) fear and division, some (relatively small) groups do. They are currently being afforded too much legitimacy and, in some cases, being rewarded financially. A radical change in policy is required to discourage the anti-social, divisive practices of positioning political or sectarian flags on public property.

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:

Public services should be provided in places which are welcoming to all. No member of the public should feel that they are "playing away from home", when accessing a public service. Therefore political/ sectarian flags should be removed.

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:

The system should be as transparent as possible to all.

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 will help people what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, and why.

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 is essential. Rules without enforcement are meaningless. There has to be a clear deterrent to those seeking to obstruct the enforcement of the law.

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:

The police should be in charge of law and order in all areas. They should not have to ask permission from certain paramilitary groups when it comes to enforcing the law. And they should be properly resourced to ensure that they can provide the necessary maintenance of law and order.

Clause 7: Interpretation

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Yes

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I agree that some flags and emblems, at certain times, in certain contexts, may be related to legitimate identity and cultural expression during traditional periods of celebration. However, it is important that these “traditional periods of cultural expression” are clearly identified. For example, 5th July - 19th July for traditional Unionist celebrations of the 12th July period. Perhaps from 5 days before Easter until 5 days after Easter for the Nationalist commemoration of the Easter Rising. Other similar periods may be identified. Applications, by named individuals, should be made for the positioning of flags in public places. These should be done in accordance with standard guidelines relating to the positioning of flags and emblems, including appropriate insurance cover. There should also be a requirement for the flags and emblems to be removed from the public space at the end of the “traditional periods of cultural expression”

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:

It is helpful to have “Rebuttable presumption “ and “Balanced evaluation” explained here.