

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 596

Calling for the restoration of power-sharing in Northern Ireland.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 2023

Mr. LAWLER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling for the restoration of power-sharing in Northern
Ireland.

Whereas, on May 5, 2022, elections were held for the Northern Ireland Assembly, the region's devolved legislature;

Whereas, in the 2022 Northern Ireland Assembly election, the Sinn Fein party won the largest number of seats, 27 out of 90, entitling the party's Vice President and former Deputy First Minister, Michelle O'Neill, to accede to the position of First Minister of Northern Ireland;

Whereas, following the 2022 Northern Ireland Assembly election, the Democratic Unionist Party, which was the largest party prior to the election, has effectively prevented the convening of the new Assembly, the Executive, and the operation of the North/South Ministerial Council;

Whereas the Democratic Unionist Party has failed to make explicit its demands for reestablishing the power-sharing government in Northern Ireland, other than its protests against Northern Ireland Protocol, which was brokered by the United Kingdom independent of the devolved government bodies of the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland, in response to the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union and sets out post-Brexit arrangements for Northern Ireland to ensure an open border on the island of Ireland and in the spirit of protecting the gains of the Northern Ireland peace process;

Whereas the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein disagree on the merits of the Northern Ireland Protocol, with Sinn Fein generally supportive of the Protocol as a necessary means to maintain an open border with the Republic of Ireland and to uphold the fundamental principles underpinning the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas, on February 27, 2023, the United Kingdom and the European Union announced the Windsor Framework to address challenges posed by the Northern Ireland Protocol;

Whereas the Windsor Framework was formally adopted by the United Kingdom and the European Union on March 24, 2023, but the Democratic Unionist Party continues to undermine its full implementation;

Whereas the Government of the United Kingdom continues to engage with all of the political parties in Northern Ireland, including the Democratic Unionist Party, to facilitate the establishment of a new power-sharing government in Northern Ireland consistent with the results of the 2022 elections;

Whereas, during Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s speech for the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, he stated that the Government of the United Kingdom “stand[s] ready to work with our partners in the Irish government and the local parties to ensure that the institutions are up and running again as soon as possible,” and that the Government of the United Kingdom “must keep working to persuade all parts of the community that returning to the institutions is the best path.”;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement, adopted in 1998, established the power-sharing government in Northern Ireland and institutions to facilitate communication and cooperation among Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the Government of the United Kingdom;

Whereas blocking the work of the current Assembly and Executive in Northern Ireland as a bargaining chip to resolve an external policy matter between the Democratic Unionist Party and the United Kingdom violates the spirit and intent of the Good Friday Agreement’s power-sharing provisions and represents an undermining of the political process in Northern Ireland and a disserve to the Northern Ireland community that the Democratic Unionist Party claims to represent;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement and other past progress concerning Northern Ireland has been facilitated and moved forward with the support of civic institutions and leaders in the United States; and

Whereas the appointment of a new U.S. Special Envoy to Northern Ireland for Economic Affairs on December 19, 2022, reaffirms the United States Government’s commitment to the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement, including a power-sharing government, and the advance-

ment of peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) calls on the Democratic Unionist Party to
3 support in good faith the re-establishment of govern-
4 ment institutions in Northern Ireland, as obligated
5 under the power-sharing arrangements made in the
6 Good Friday Agreement;

7 (2) calls on all participants of the Good Friday
8 Agreement to honor their obligations to this agree-
9 ment in full;

10 (3) supports democratic elections in Northern
11 Ireland and the restoration of the power-sharing
12 government in line with the election results;

13 (4) supports the Government of the United
14 Kingdom's continued determination to bring about
15 the restoration of the devolved institutions in North-
16 ern Ireland as set out in the Good Friday Agree-
17 ment; and

18 (5) calls on the President and the U.S. Special
19 Envoy to Northern Ireland to use their influence
20 and longstanding commitment to the Good Friday
21 Agreement to urge all relevant parties to restore
22 power-sharing in Northern Ireland.

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