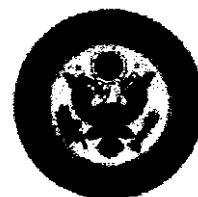




Autism Caucus



Autism Caucus

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Washington, DC

25th September 2007

Context

Autism has become a key disability issue requiring legal redress as Northern Ireland emerges from over 30 years of conflict. The Northern Ireland Assembly is the first Assembly/Parliament in the British Isles to vote for Autism Spectrum Disorders legislation and it did so unanimously in January 2007. The NI Assembly Autism Caucus recognised parallels in the work of the Autism Caucus at the US Congress and wishes to establish formal links for mutual benefit and encouragement.

Rationale for developing links

- Sharing of issues and mutual support;
- Mutual recognition of the need for political action to achieve social change, underpin service provision and activate strategic planning;
- Mutual role of acting as a conduit for concerns of constituents; and
- Shared ethos of cross community and cross party foundation and collaboration i.e. US Caucus (Republican/Democrat), Northern Ireland Caucus (DUP/Sinn Fein/UUP/SDLP/Alliance).

Aims of MOU

- Support for the development of legislation in the Northern Ireland Assembly and the U.S. Congress in dealing with the issue of Autism;
- Identification of areas of common interest e.g. access to research data;
- Encouragement of US/NI exchange opportunities e.g. university links;

We the undersigned commit ourselves to support the principles of this agreement:

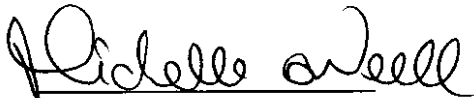
Signed on behalf of the
Northern Ireland Assembly
Autism Caucus



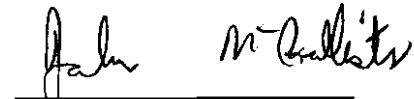
Iris Robinson MP MLA



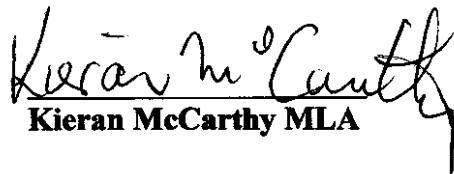
Dominic Bradley MLA



Michelle O'Neill MLA

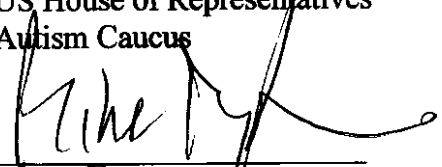


John McCallister MLA

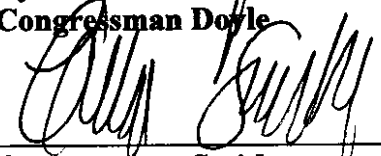


Kieran McCarthy MLA

Signed on behalf of the
US House of Representatives
Autism Caucus



Congressman Doyle



Congressman Smith