

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 117

Expressing support for the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, or the Belfast Agreement, and subsequent agreements and arrangements for implementation to support peace on the island of Ireland.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 16, 2021

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, or the Belfast Agreement, and subsequent agreements and arrangements for implementation to support peace on the island of Ireland.

Whereas, on April 10, 1998, the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom signed the Good Friday Agreement, also known as the “Belfast Agreement”;

Whereas the goals of the Good Friday Agreement were to bring a new era of devolved government and democracy to Northern Ireland, end violence, and ensure peace for the people of the island of Ireland;

Whereas the successful negotiation of the Good Friday Agreement stands as a historic and groundbreaking success that has proven critical to the decades of relative peace that have followed;

Whereas the return to power sharing in 2020 after the collapse of power-sharing institutions in 2017 creates new opportunities for strengthening peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland;

Whereas the agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and the protocol to that agreement on Northern Ireland preserving an open border on the island of Ireland (in this preamble referred to as the “Northern Ireland Protocol”), are intended to protect the peace forged under the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas, despite the historic progress of the Good Friday Agreement and subsequent agreements, including the Stormont House Agreement agreed to in December 2014, important issues remain unresolved in Northern Ireland, including the passage of a Bill of Rights, securing justice for all victims of violence, including state-sponsored violence, and reducing sectarian divisions and promoting reconciliation;

Whereas section 6 of the Good Friday Agreement (“Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity”) recognizes “the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity” as part of “the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland” and declares the Government of the United Kingdom will seek ways to encourage the use of and education in the Irish language and provide opportunities for Irish language arts;

Whereas the reintroduction of barriers, checkpoints, or personnel on the island of Ireland, also known as a “hard border”, including through the invocation of Article 16 of the Northern Ireland Protocol, would threaten the successes of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas the United States Congress played a prominent role in support of negotiations of the Good Friday Agreement and has taken a leading role in promoting peace on the island of Ireland more broadly; and

Whereas Congress greatly values the close relationships the United States shares with both the United Kingdom and Ireland and stands steadfastly committed to supporting the peaceful resolution of any and all political challenges in Northern Ireland: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) urges the United Kingdom and the Euro-
3 pean Union to support peace on the island of Ireland
4 and the principles, objectives, and commitments of
5 the Good Friday Agreement, also known as the
6 “Belfast Agreement”;

7 (2) expresses support for the full implementa-
8 tion of the Good Friday Agreement and subsequent
9 agreements, including the Stormont House Agree-
10 ment agreed to in December 2014, as well as the
11 protocol on Northern Ireland to the agreement on
12 the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Eu-
13 ropean Union (in this resolution referred to as the
14 “Northern Ireland Protocol”);

1 (3) congratulates all parties in Northern Ire-
2 land for the return in January 2020 to a power-
3 sharing agreement;

4 (4) urges all parties in Northern Ireland to
5 work collectively to ensure the implementation of all
6 commitments of the Good Friday Agreement and
7 subsequent agreements so that all of the institutions
8 of the Good Friday Agreement can operate success-
9 fully and sustainably and that ongoing political chal-
10 lenges can be overcome;

11 (5) calls for continuing attention and action to
12 resolve the injustices of past violence, including
13 state-sponsored violence;

14 (6) supports the passage of a Bill of Rights for
15 Northern Ireland and the right of all the people on
16 the island of Ireland to self-determine their future as
17 provided for in the Good Friday Agreement;

18 (7) encourages renewed attention to educational
19 and cultural efforts that will ensure the rich lan-
20 guage, literature, and arts of Northern Ireland en-
21 dure and are not diminished;

22 (8) expresses support for the Northern Ireland
23 Protocol and its full implementation, which ensures
24 through international agreement that no “hard bor-

1 der'' will be reintroduced on the island of Ireland;
2 and

3 (9) will insist that any new or amended trade
4 agreements and other bilateral agreements between
5 the Government of the United States and the Gov-
6 ernment of the United Kingdom take into account,
7 as relevant, conditions requiring that obligations
8 under the Good Friday Agreement be met.

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