

Northern Ireland Assembly Pledge to Autism.

As democratically elected members of this Northern Ireland Assembly, we fully support the excellent initiative by Autism Northern Ireland in launching this programme of action which hopefully will make the proposed Northern Ireland Autism Act a meaningful piece of legislation. There can be no doubting this is a much-needed Act. For example, The Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability, if its key recommendations for Autism are implemented, will have disastrous effects on those with Autism and their carers. Autism does not specifically target a single class, creed, colour, gender or race – it can affect everyone in our community and this is why we as politicians, representing our diverse policies, have come together to champion this very worthy common cause. The challenges and hurt faced by those with Autism and their families, moves well beyond party political differences. The proposed Northern Ireland Autism Act would guarantee the future security and rights of those on the Autistic Spectrum. If we fail as politicians to deliver this Act; if Autism Northern Ireland fails to generate the necessary lobbying in our community – then the NI Mental Health and Learning Disability Review could condemn thousands in our community to a life of uncertainty and increased stress for their loved ones who have to care for them. We make this special appeal to all our constituents across Northern Ireland – just as we have united as political representatives behind the campaign to eventually bring the Northern Ireland Autism Act onto the statute books, give your wholehearted support to Autism Northern Ireland in this noble campaign for justice. If you do, and if we succeed, thousands of individuals living with Autism will at last receive the critical help they need. This most vulnerable section of our NI community will at last have their Human Rights established and access to Social Justice.