



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

INFORMATION FOR OBJECTORS TO HYBRID BILLS

Information for those wishing to object to a Hybrid Bill introduced in the Scottish Parliament.

What is a Hybrid Bill?

A Hybrid Bill is a type of Public Bill, introduced by a Scottish Government Minister, which adversely affects the private interests of people or bodies in a manner different to the private interests of other people or bodies in the same category or class. A Hybrid Bill may, for example, give authority for a construction project or authorise the compulsory acquisition of land or buildings. A Hybrid Bill may largely deal with matters of general public policy, with only some provisions having an adverse impact on private interests.

Prior to introduction, the Scottish Government must consult on the purposes of the Bill, and must individually notify anyone considered to be directly affected by the Bill of the Bill's purposes, its date of introduction, and where to seek further information. Advertisements must be placed in newspapers and notices must be displayed in libraries or other premises.

When the Bill is introduced, the Scottish Government must lodge accompanying documents explaining the background to the Bill and how it will work.

Once introduced, the Bill and all or most of the accompanying documents are available on the Parliament's website. Copies are also available in libraries or other premises.

Who can object?

It is open to any individual, company or group of people who consider that their interests would be adversely affected by the Bill to object. Where two or more objectors have similar concerns, they may wish to consider lodging a joint objection rather than objecting individually. Where individual objections are lodged, they may be "grouped" by the Hybrid Bill Committee and so considered together.

Is there a time limit?

Objections must be lodged with the clerks no later than 60 days after the introduction of the Bill. This is known as the “objection period”. The closing date for objections will be advertised on the Parliament’s website. Late objections can sometimes be accepted if they are lodged with a statement explaining the delay.

What do I need to do?

An objection must:

- be signed (by or on behalf of the objector) and dated
- be in English or Gaelic
- be printed, typed or clearly hand-written
- set out the objector’s name, address and other contact details
- set out the nature of the objection
- explain whether the objection is against the whole Bill or only certain provisions
- specify how the objector’s interests would be adversely affected by the Bill.

If all these criteria are met, the objection is “admissible” and will be considered by the Hybrid Bill Committee.

How do I lodge an objection?

Objections can be e-mailed, sent by post or delivered in person to the Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU). Contact details for NGBU are given at the end.

What happens next?

NGBU will notify each objector whether their objection is admissible. In the case of an objection signed by more than one individual, NGBU will correspond with the principal signatory on the objection (and that signatory should be clearly identified). It is the responsibility of that person to liaise with the other signatories.

At the end of the objection period a list of the names of those who have lodged admissible objections is published in the Parliament’s Business Bulletin.

What is the role of MSPs in considering objections?

Each Hybrid Bill is considered by a Committee of between three and five MSPs established for the purpose. The Committee, at Stage 1, must consider all admissible objections lodged and must reject any where the objector’s interests are not (in the Committee’s opinion) clearly adversely affected by the Bill. The Committee conducts detailed scrutiny of the remaining objections at Stage 2, including by hearing directly from objectors and the Scottish Government.

What if I change my mind?

An objector may withdraw an objection at any time after it is lodged, by notifying NGBU.

What happens in the Parliament?

There is a 3-stage Parliamentary process comprising:

- Stage 1 – preliminary consideration of objections by the Hybrid Bill Committee, scrutiny by that and other committees and preparation of a Stage 1 report, followed by a debate in the Parliament and a decision whether to agree the general principles of the Bill and whether it should proceed as a Hybrid Bill
- Stage 2 – detailed consideration of objections and consideration by the Hybrid Bill Committee of any amendments lodged
- Stage 3 – consideration by the whole Parliament of any further amendments lodged, followed by a debate and decision on whether to pass the Bill.

Additional information about the process is available in the Guidance on Hybrid Bills.

Where can I find out more?

Further information can be found on the Scottish Parliament website:

<http://www.parliament.scot/>

The **Standing Orders** relevant to Hybrid Bills can be found under Parliamentary Business / Parliamentary Procedure / Standing Orders of the Scottish Parliament / Chapter 9C:

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/26511.aspx>

The **Guidance on Hybrid Bills** can be found under Parliamentary Business / Bills / Bills Explained / Public, Private & Hybrid Bills Guidance / Guidance on Hybrid Bills

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/79103.aspx>

Once the Hybrid Bill has been introduced:

The **Bill and accompanying documents** can be found under Parliamentary Business / Bills / Current Bills:

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/576.aspx>

Information about **Hybrid Bill Committees** (once established) can be found under Parliamentary Business / Committees:

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/committees.aspx>

The **Business Bulletin** can be found under:

Parliamentary Business / Business Bulletin:

<https://bb.parliament.scot>

Non-Government Bills Unit

Address Non-Government Bills Unit
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Telephone 0131 348 5246

Textphone users can contact us on **0800 092 7100**. We also welcome calls using the Text Relay service.

Text **07786 209 888**
Email nqbu@parliament.scot
Website www.parliament.scot

