



KERRY DEAF RESOURCE CENTRE

KDRC provides services to Deaf and hard of hearing people at county level and contributes to national issues of equality, access and rights.

Charity No: **CHY20854**

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Tralee
Co. Kerry

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IRISH SIGN LANGUAGE BILL PASSES STAGE 3 IN THE SENATE.

As many of you know the Irish Deaf Society (IDS) has been leading a campaign to secure official recognition of Irish Sign Language (ISL).

We are delighted to let you know that the Bill passed the 3rd stage in The Senate during the week.

Members of the Deaf community were also invited to meetings and got to watch the debate including representatives from the IDS, Cork Deaf Club, Cork Deaf Enterprises, SLIS, CISLI, DeafHear & Willie White represented our service, the Kerry Deaf Resource Centre.



MEETINGS HELD PRIOR TO STAGE 3 VOTING.



Prior to the Senate debate & vote on Wednesday, a number of meetings have been held in Government building over the past few weeks.

In addition, meetings were held in other counties with local Senators. We know our friends & colleagues in the Cork Deaf Club & Cork Deaf Association have been very busy also as the Leader of the Senate is from Cork.



Irish Sign
Language
Recognition
Campaign

On the day before the vote, five meetings were held with Senators, assistants, & advisors of Fianna Fáil, Civil Engagement Group, Fine Gael, Labour Independents and a last-minute meeting

with the Minister for Disability & his advisors. This was an opportunity for all parties to discuss sections of the Bill in detail & to hear the concerns of the Deaf community before the Bill went to vote in the Senate Chambers.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL PRIOR TO VOTING

Before the Senate could vote on the Bill, both parties had the opportunity to table amendments.

The IDS & the Bill sponsors sent in amendments formally & on time. However, we were disappointed to see the other side withdraw their proposed amendments at the last minute.



However, we were delighted to see Fianna Fáil, Labour, Independents, Sinn Féin, Civil Engagement ĆGroup show superb support. After a robust debate, the Bill secured enough votes and now moves onto the 4th stage **Report Stage**.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



Many people have asked the IDS what happens next? This is a good question to ask as the process of a Bill becoming Law is complicated.

Once a Bill passes one House (Senate or Dáil), it is sent to the other House for **Second Stage Considerations**.

It then goes through all stages in that House. A Bill must pass through **BOTH HOUSES** before being sent to the President for signature where it then becomes an Act/ Law.

The ISL Bill needs to pass another two stages in the Senate- **Report Stage & Final Stage**.

Thereafter, it will move over to Dáil Éireann where it will need to pass a further 5 stages: **Initiation, Second Stage, Committee Stage, Report Stage and Final Stage**.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT?

As you can imagine, this is a complex issue that has taken years to get to this stage. As there are so many stages still to go, before ISL gets full



Irish Deaf Society

recognition as a language, it is important we all work together & support the IDS in their long-standing campaign. In the meantime, we know the Irish Deaf Society would appreciate it if you could contact your local Senators & urge them to support the ISL Bill.

You can also check out their Facebook page to learn more about the campaign & to see what is happening next?

<https://www.facebook.com/IrishSignLanguageRecognitionCampaign>