

27<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Ms. Jo-Anne Dobson MLA  
Constituency Office  
18 Rathfriland Street  
Banbridge  
BT32 3LA

Dear Ms. Dobson,

Thank you for consulting with the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland on your proposed organ donation Bill.

Your efforts to promote awareness on organ donation and introduce legislation that could save lives are to be commended.

As Commissioner for Older People my focus is on the interests and wellbeing of all older people. This issue is one that should command the widest possible consultation with individuals as it could impact so deeply on individuals and their family members at times of trauma and upset.

I would expect that any proposals you bring forward would consider the specific aspects of ageing and health, as this may impact on older people both as potential recipients and donors. I would also wish to see strong safeguards in place to ensure that every opportunity is given to individuals to register their donation preference and every respect is given to the wishes of families.

Vulnerable adults should also be protected, especially those with age-related conditions which diminish their capacity to make decisions for themselves.

I will not be responding to the survey questions as my remit is to represent all older people in Northern Ireland. Should this matter gain support and you are consulting more widely, I would be happy to advise you on reaching out to older people, to take their views directly.

Yours sincerely,



**Claire Keatinge**  
**Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland**