

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

Draft Second Reading Speech

Bill No 14

Proposed by Lady Brenda Sheil

Your Grace

Members of Synod will remember that last year leave was given for the introduction of this Special Bill in 2003 to amend, in Chapter IX of the Constitution, certain Canons of the Church of Ireland.

[In a few minutes time] members will be asked to consider Bill No 15, a Bill to consolidate the Constitution of Church of Ireland.

In order that inclusive language may be used throughout the Constitution, Bill No 15 will include, as does the Statute of 1988, certain definitions. One such definition will be that the term ‘member of the clergy’ or ‘clergy’ shall, unless otherwise specifically provided, mean a deacon or priest of the Church of Ireland or of a Church in communion with that Church.

Chapter IX of the Constitution contains the Canons of the Church of Ireland and since an amendment of any of the Canons which concern the ‘Articles, Doctrines, Rites, Rubrics or formularies of the Church’ requires a Special Bill under section 26(1) of Chapter I of the Constitution, this Bill is now before General Synod so that the amendments therein, drafted to ensure inclusive language throughout the Constitution, may be included in this consolidation of the Constitution of 2003 as to be found in Bill No 15 and the schedule thereto.

Your Grace, as this is a Special Bill all of the amendments to the relevant Canons were in the Schedule to the Resolution before and approved by General Synod last year and no notice of amendments to the provisions therein was tabled within the month of the end of last year’s General Synod.

Accordingly the contents of this Bill and of the Schedule thereto remain as before last year’s Synod.

I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.