



Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Inc.
Friendship. Unity & Christian Charity



Press Release August 30, 2026

www.laoh.org

laohnationalpublicrelations@gmail.com

National President of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Statement on British Prime Minister's Comments on Irish Unity Referendum is "Off the Table"

The framework for a United Ireland border poll was etched out in the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and through the Northern Ireland Act of 1998 it was incorporated into UK law. As Irish American Women, the members of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Inc. (LAOH) are proud of the United States role in the Good Friday Agreement.

When leadership in Dublin, Michael Martin, confesses he is not willing to pursue a border poll, this only encourages UK Secretary of State Andy Burnham to follow through with a statement made on August 27. Burnham, on his first official visit to Northern Ireland, stated that the referendum on Irish Unity is "off the table." It is not a surprise that the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader Gavin Robinson said Burnham's remarks on a border poll were "particularly encouraging" and were "putting to bed the nonsense" discussed in recent months. Despite everything, the conversation is happening and has been for some time, and I do not see it ending now.

The Irish people have a right to make their own decision on how they want to be governed. As an American of Irish descent, I support their right, as this is how, and why, most Americans of Irish descent ended up in the United States in the first place. The people of Ireland need our support. America liberated themselves from British rule and we recognize the right of the Irish people to determine their own future.

I have attended 3 forums on Irish Unity with a variety of panelists from different faiths and occupations. The first one I attended was in NY, the second one in Dublin and recently I attended one in Derry, where I split my time living. We are 10 minutes from the border, and I hear all sides of the issue. It is interesting that whether it was a forum in the US, the Republic or the North of Ireland, people want to hear about Irish unity and have an opportunity to voice their opinion.

The issues of health care and housing in the North of Ireland have to be addressed immediately, and facts support the argument that a United Ireland will address these issues on a National level rather than on a segmented way.

The LAOH is committed to the peaceful reunification of Ireland. As Irish Americans and Americans of Irish descent, we believe that discussion and preparations for Irish Unity are essential. Refusing even to contemplate a referendum dismisses the legitimate aspirations and democratic rights of the people of Ireland.