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**Northern Ireland could blaze a trail for bereaved families**

Ministers in Stormont have the chance to succeed where those in Westminster have failed in helping the loved-ones of people in fatal accidents.

Not-for-profit campaign organisation the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) says the categories of people able to claim compensation for a fatality should be extended to include siblings and the parents of adult children.

“Bereavement damages compensate, in so far as money can, the grief, sorrow and loss of a family member when they have died because of the negligence of another person,” explained Karl Tonks, president of APIL.

A recent consultation by the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and Personnel considers extending the list of who is entitled to bereavement damages.

“Bereft siblings can be faced with a huge loss, and a bereaved parent’s anguish will not be any less just because the child has passed his 18th birthday,” Karl went on.

“Despite similar reviews and recommendations to extend the system, some bereaved people in England and Wales continue to be overlooked. Northern Ireland now has the chance to take its own path and do the best it can for families who have suffered the ultimate loss”.

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Notes for editors:

- APIL responded to the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and Personnel consultation, *The Law on Damages*. Read APIL's full response here: <http://www.apil.org.uk/consultations-and-apil-responses>.
- APIL (Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) is a not-for-profit organisation whose members are dedicated to campaigning for improvements in the law to help people who are injured or become ill through no fault of their own.
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