



Department for  
International Trade

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Angus Brendan MacNeil MP  
International Trade Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
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10 February 2019

Dear Angus,

### **Freeports Consultation: Boosting Trade, Jobs and Investment Across the UK**

Today the Government launched a consultation on the development of Freeports in the UK, which we want to become innovative hubs of global trade, helping to regenerate communities through the creation of high-skilled job opportunities. Freeports will be a cornerstone of the Government's plan to level up opportunity across the country.

Freeports, which have different customs rules than the rest of the country, are used around the world to drive prosperity. From the UAE to the USA, China to California, global Freeports support trade, jobs and investment.

That's why we're cutting red tape by streamlining customs processes, exploring the use of planning measures to speed up planning processes and accelerate development at Freeports, and consulting on a comprehensive set of tax breaks to support businesses.

We want Freeports to act as hotbeds of innovation. That's why we're also looking at regulatory flexibilities, funding and challenges which will support innovators generating new ideas.

We believe that maritime, air and rail ports could all act as credible Freeports and will therefore welcome application from all modes of ports.

We want all the nations of the UK to be able to share in the benefits of Freeports. As such, we intend to work with the Devolved Administrations to develop proposals that would enable the creation of Freeports in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in addition to those in England.

We would welcome the views of the Committee and ask that you encourage businesses, organisations and interested groups to engage with the consultation.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Truss', is centered on the page.

**THE RT HON ELIZABETH TRUSS MP**  
Secretary of State for International Trade  
& President of the Board of Trade