



# International Trade Committee

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Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP  
Secretary of State for International Trade  
Department for International Trade  
Old Admiralty Building  
London  
SW1A 2DY

29 June 2022

Dear Anne-Marie,

Following the events of the last 24 hours, and your officials informing us that you will not be extending the 'CRaG period' as requested in our report published today,<sup>1</sup> I am writing to strongly urge you to reconsider.

I have seen concerns expressed that this would push the scrutiny period into September, as if that were a critical factor, but a week or two in September is not a high price to pay for a proper scrutiny process for the UK's first entirely new free trade agreement (FTA) following Brexit.

Strong scrutiny of FTAs is vital, and having sufficient time to develop a report that reflects all the complexities must be a given, not something that has to be rushed out after CRaG has been triggered. The way things have emerged piecemeal for the Australia FTA could set a poor precedent for future scrutiny, while a short extension by the Government would give the House the time it needs to undertake its serious role in scrutinising FTAs.

Given the urgency of this matter, I ask for your formal reply by the end of this week.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Liaison Committee following discussion this afternoon with the Committee and its support of our call for an extension to CRaG. I am also copying it to the Chairs of the International Agreements Committee, the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, given their related interest. I am additionally copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Speaker, and the Leader of the House.

In accordance with our usual practice, this letter, along with any replies, will be published on the Committee's webpage.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angus B MacNeil".

Angus Brendan MacNeil  
Chair of the International Trade Committee

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<sup>1</sup> International Trade Committee, First Report of Session 2022-23, [UK trade negotiations: Scrutiny of Agreement with Australia](#), HC 444