



HOUSE OF LORDS

European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol
on Ireland/Northern Ireland

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Rt Hon James Cleverly MP
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London
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25 July 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

Windsor Framework labelling requirements

Today the European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland has published its latest Report, 'The Windsor Framework', which has been informed by evidence from business representatives, trade bodies, academic, legal and trade experts as well as community organisation representatives.

We are writing to highlight one particularly urgent issue, which was repeatedly raised by witnesses during our inquiry: the new set of labelling requirements on businesses, which will be phased in from 1 October 2023 for all fresh meat products and some dairy products moving into Northern Ireland.

We note that on 9 June 2023, the Government published further detail on the arrangements giving effect to the Windsor Framework, including policy papers and guidance on the movement of goods and the UK Internal Market Scheme, the Retail Movement Scheme and labelling, supply of medicines, and subsidy control.

Nevertheless, our Report concluded at paragraph 85 that, though the guidance was welcome, "the amount of time for businesses to adapt their systems is now limited" and that "Business representatives expressed significant concern about the lack of guidance around labelling requirements as the October 2023 deadline for the first phase of the Retail Movement Scheme approached."

Our Committee will seek feedback from business representatives in the autumn on their preparations for the new requirements. In the meantime, however, we invite you as a matter of urgency to summarise this new guidance, and to outline the timetable for any further guidance to follow. We also invite you to set out how the Government will support businesses in adapting to these changes.

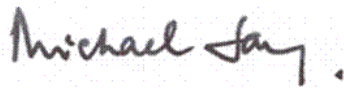
The Report also noted that the "Government has stated that its decision to adopt a UK-wide labelling scheme was in part to underpin Northern Ireland's position within the UK. Yet the first phase of the Retail Movement Scheme will be limited in scope to relevant goods moving to Northern Ireland through the green lane." We invite you to set out what assessment has been made of the implications of the staggered introduction of labelling requirements for Northern Ireland's place within the UK internal market. We also invite you to provide clarity

on the timetable for consultation and introducing legislation on subsequent phases of the Retail Movement Scheme applying across the UK as a whole. We would also be grateful if you could clarify whether, in the absence of such legislation ahead of the 1 October 2023, the default position for goods in scope of the labelling requirements will be to use the red lane.

In light of the growing urgency of this matter, we would be grateful for a response to this letter separately to and in advance of the Government's reply to the Report and before the two Houses return on 4 September. A response to this timeframe will be vital in order to provide clarity for businesses in Great Britain and Northern Ireland ahead of the impending deadlines for implementation.

I am copying this letter to Sir William Cash MP, Chair of the Commons European Scrutiny Committee, George Wilson, Clerk of the Commons European Scrutiny Committee, Simon Hoare MP, Chair of the Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Rizgar Kiyak, Parliamentary Unit, Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office; and the Secretariat of the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for the Executive Office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Michael Jay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end.

Lord Jay of Ewelme
Chair of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee