



Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

Committee Office House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 2173 Email northircom@parliament.uk Website www.parliament.uk

Rt. Hon. David Davis MP
Secretary of State for Exiting the EU
9 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AG

Dear David,

1 May 2018

I am writing in relation to our invitation—sent by the Committee secretariat on 20 March—to give oral evidence as part of our investigation into the future of the land border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. We published our report on 16 March but, as we made clear, we intend our scrutiny to be ongoing.

The issue of the border remains unresolved. Finding a solution is key to securing the right deal for the UK as we leave the EU. To date, we have not seen a worked up, coherent proposal that would allow the UK to be freed from the strictures of the Customs Union and Single Market and avoid additional infrastructure at the border. Our invitation is extended as a genuine and sincere opportunity to rectify this.

To be clear, it is in your capacity as the UK's chief negotiator that we have invited you to give evidence to us and we repeat that invitation now. The Committee has previously taken evidence from your Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Robin Walker MP, for which we are grateful, but given the importance of the border to the UK-EU negotiations, we believe we now need to hear from you as the Minister leading the talks. Your EU counterpart, Michel Barnier, gave evidence to this Committee in Brussels in January.

You have given evidence to the Lords European Union Committee, the Commons Exiting the European Union Committee and the Commons European Scrutiny Committee. We hope, given the importance of resolving the border issue, that you will not only extend the same facility to our Committee but embrace the opportunity this invitation presents.

We welcome your recent visit to the border in Northern Ireland. It is unfortunate that some of the reporting cast the visit in a negative light. Visiting the border is crucial in understanding the complexity of the problem and we are glad you have had the opportunity to see it. You may wish to use the evidence session to discuss the visit and how it is informing your work on developing solutions.

Yours ever, *Andrew*

Dr Andrew Murrison MP
Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee