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Thank you for your letter of 1 May inviting me to give evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.

I am grateful to the Committee for its continued focus on the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland, and for choosing to extend its inquiry to give further consideration to this important issue.

During my recent evidence sessions with the Exiting the EU Committee and the Lords EU Committee, on 25 April and 1 May respectively, I answered a number of questions from members of both Committees in relation to the negotiations and Northern Ireland.

I understand that as the Committee resumes its inquiry on the land border, it would wish to take further ministerial evidence to take account of developments since the publication of its report in March. I am therefore happy to suggest that my department's Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Robin Walker MP, and the Northern Ireland Office's Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Shailesh Vara MP, jointly give evidence to Committee.

A joint ministerial appearance would reflect the close engagement between my department and the Northern Ireland Office, ensuring both departments can update the Committee on the progress made since the last evidence session on 29 November 2017. Policy on Northern Ireland and Ireland in the context of EU Exit falls within Robin Walker's ministerial portfolio and, as he told the Committee last November, both he and I work very closely on these issues. I am therefore confident the Committee would find this joint session helpful.

Of course should the Committee have any outstanding questions following the session I would be very happy for the Committee to write to me.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

RT-HON DAVID DAVIS MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION