

**Christopher Osborne**

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**From:** COPE, Robert <COPER@parliament.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 July 2016 11:09  
**To:** Christopher Osborne  
**Cc:** Northern Ireland Affairs Committee; TAYLOR, Nicholas  
**Subject:** RE: Inquiry into the electricity sector in Northern Ireland

Dear Christopher,

Thanks for your email earlier in the week. I'm sorry you hadn't heard about the inquiry previously. Are you on our mailing list for press notices? If not, then we can add you easily.

There is still time to submit written evidence to the inquiry, so if you would like to send us something that would be great. We are paused for a couple of months now with the summer recess approaching. So if you could send us something sometime this month, that would be great.

Best wishes,

Rob

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**From:** Christopher Osborne [mailto:christopher@ufuhq.com]  
**Sent:** 05 July 2016 12:35  
**To:** COPE, Robert <COPER@parliament.uk>  
**Cc:** Northern Ireland Affairs Committee <NORTHIRCOM@parliament.uk>  
**Subject:** Inquiry into the electricity sector in Northern Ireland  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon Robert.

My name is Chris Osborne and I am the Senior Policy Officer with the Ulster Farmers Union.

It has been brought to my attention that the NI Affairs Committee have launched an inquiry into the Electricity Sector in Northern Ireland, however, the deadline for written submissions closed on 1 June 2016. We cannot understand why this was not brought to our attention as we are the largest representatives of the small scale renewable energy sector in NI and we would have welcomed the opportunity to provide written and/or oral evidence to the Committee. Our members have been constructing wind turbines, Anaerobic Digestion plants, solar pv (roof and ground mounted) on their farms for the last 10 years and we believe that we have much to bring to the inquiry. In the last 7 years since I have been responsible for this sector, we have encountered significant barriers in terms of grid connection, government support (including a stalled energy bill at Stormont) and now with the Northern Ireland Renewable Obligation (NIRO) coming to a close our sector is facing an uncertain future.

2

The NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into the Electricity Sector would be an ideal opportunity for the UFU to not only explain the problems that we have encountered in the energy sector, but it would also allow the UFU to illustrate how we are currently leading the way in attempting to map out alternative vision as to the small scale renewable sector could integrate with the energy infrastructure. For the last 5 years the UFU have advocated what is known as local supply, smart metering, microgrids and on-farm energy storage. This would only be possible with a rejuvenated energy bill in NI.

Since we have missed the deadline would it be possible for the UFU to provide evidence at this stage?

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Chris Osborne**  
**Senior Policy Officer**

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