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31<sup>st</sup> May 2016

Mr Simon Hamilton MLA  
Minister  
Department for the Economy  
Adelaide House  
39-49 Adelaide Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8FD

Dear Minister,

**Re: Urgent need for decision on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016 Consultation on closure of Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation to new small scale onshore wind**

I write on behalf of the UFU, Simple Power Ltd, Wind NI and Renewable NI Ltd who collectively represent the majority of landowners involved in the small scale onshore wind sector in Northern Ireland.

We jointly responded to the recent consultation on the closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) to new small scale onshore wind. We are now very anxious that your Department brings forward its decision on the consultation and the pursuant SL1 legislation before the summer Assembly recess.

Your officials will no doubt advise that any delay in bringing forward the closure legislation poses a risk that DECC may activate a 'backstop' legislative power in its Energy Bill, which could undermine the entire NIRO closure process and put at risk many millions of pounds of investment and hundreds of direct and indirect jobs in the small scale wind sector.

Without wishing to regurgitate the details of the consultation, the UFU, Simple Power, Wind NI, Renewable NI and others including the Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG), believe the best option within the Consultation is **Option 1**.

We understand your Department intends to consult separately on a new support mechanism for small scale renewables later this year and we look forward to engaging with you on it. For now, however, we are very keen to ensure the NIRO closure legislation for small scale onshore wind is passed before the Assembly recess and the planned investment in the sector goes ahead.

We look forward to hearing from you and wish you all the very best in your new role.

Yours sincerely,

**CHRIS OSBORNE**  
Senior Policy Officer, Ulster Farmers Union

Cc PHILIP RAINEY, Chief Executive, Simple Power Ltd  
ROB MCMILLAN, General Manager, Renewable NI Ltd  
STUART HALL – Director, Wind NI Ltd  
Mr Conor Murphy MLA, Chairperson Committee for the Economy

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