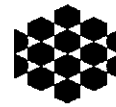


From the Office of the Minister



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The Rt Hon Chris Huhne MP
Secretary of State
Department of Energy and Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place
LONDON
SW1A 2AW

7th June 2011

Dear Chris,

ENERGY BILL

Thank you for your letter of 18 May, outlining the progress of the Energy Bill and providing information of the proposed government amendments that will apply to Northern Ireland. Thank you also for your words of congratulation on my re-appointment, I look forward to continue working with you on areas of mutual interest over the next few years.

RENEWABLE HEAT INCENTIVE (RHI)

I was pleased to learn of your intention to table an amendment to the Energy Bill that will extend legislative powers on renewable heat to Northern Ireland. This amendment will ensure that an incentive scheme for Northern Ireland can be introduced locally in a timely manner, therefore protecting the Northern Ireland renewable heat market from any undue disadvantage in comparison to the rest of the United Kingdom.

I believe that this amendment follows on from considerable co-operation at official-level. I welcome this co-operation and would like to put on record my thanks to your officials and to parliamentary council for the timely and efficient way the proposed clause has been drafted.

CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE (CCS) AND NUCLEAR SECURITY

I am content with the proposed government amendments on these issues also.

May I pass on my best wishes for the future passage of this Bill. There is a keen interest in the Executive, the Assembly and amongst the wider Northern Ireland public in the energy and environmental issues raised in the Bill and therefore I would be grateful if you could keep me informed of progress and notify me again once the Bill receives Royal Assent.

I trust that our officials will continue to work effectively together and I welcome the ongoing engagement on all matters that affect Northern Ireland, both directly and indirectly.

*Yours sincerely,
Arlene Foster*

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment