

Re: Harbours Bill – Manufacturing NI response

Manufacturing NI is an industry-led campaigning organisation which works directly with our members, workforce representatives, policymakers and regulators to challenge and encourage change in areas which impact on the cost of doing business.

Manufacturing NI welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee for Infrastructure's call for evidence on the Harbours Bill and broadly welcomes the approach.

Northern Ireland's manufacturing sector depends on efficient and reliable transport infrastructure, with ports playing a vital role in the movement of raw materials, components, and goods. Northern Ireland's Trust Ports are a key part of this, connecting local businesses with markets across the UK and internationally.

We welcome the reforms proposed for Northern Ireland's Trust Ports. The ability of Trust Ports to plan and invest for the long term is important to the competitiveness of manufacturers and the resilience of the wider supply chains.

We welcome proposals to provide greater flexibility for long-term investment and to respond to changing demands across trade and infrastructure. This flexibility will be increasingly important as Northern Ireland seeks to attract investment and strengthen supply chains.

Manufacturing NI also recognises the importance of appropriate governance, accountability, and transparency within the Trust Port model. We welcome the overall balance of the reforms in seeking to support greater investment while maintaining the public benefit and responsibilities associated with Trust Ports.

Progressing the Harbours Bill during the current Assembly mandate would provide certainty for the future and help support continued investment in Northern Ireland's infrastructure and economy.

Manufacturing NI welcomes the Harbours Bill and the important reforms it proposes. We encourage the Committee to support the Bill as it moves through the Assembly and to ensure that progress is maintained so the legislation can be delivered within the current mandate.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Kelly
CEO
Manufacturing NI
T. 07768480737