

Areas with Natural Constraints (Payments) Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

LEGISLATIVE COMPETENCE

At Introduction the Member in charge of the Bill, Mr Declan McAleer, had made the following statement under Standing Order 30:

“In my view the Areas with Natural Constraints (Payments) Bill would be within the legislative competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly.”

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BILL

TO

Require the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to make regulations under the Agriculture Act 2020 as to payments for areas with natural constraints.

BE IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by His Majesty as follows:

Regulations on payments for areas with natural constraints

1.—(1) The Department must exercise the power set out in Part 1 of Schedule 6 to the Agriculture Act 2020 in order to make regulations in respect of payments for areas with natural constraints.

5 (2) The Department must make the regulations within 12 months of the coming into operation of this Act.

 (3) The regulations must, in particular, ensure that—

10 (a) persons receive payment in no less generous terms than the payment rates to which persons were entitled to be paid under the Areas of Natural Constraint Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018,

 (b) those payment rates are increased annually, by at least the percentage increase in the prices index for that year,

15 (c) in paragraph (b), the prices index means an index or figures published by the Statistics Board (a body corporate established under section 1 of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007), for the year in question.

 (4) In this Act—

 “areas with natural constraints” has the same meaning as in Part 1 of Schedule 6 to the Agriculture Act 2020, and

20 “Department” means the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Commencement and short title

2.—(1) This Act comes into operation on the day after receiving Royal Assent.

(2) This Act may be cited as the Areas with Natural Constraints (Payments) Act (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Areas with Natural Constraints (Payments) Bill

[AS INTRODUCED]

A Bill to require the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to make regulations under the Agriculture Act 2020 as to payments for areas with natural constraints.

Introduced by: Mr Declan McAleer

On: 16 February 2026

Bill Type: Non-Executive Bill

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

**An Explanatory and Financial Memorandum is printed separately as
NIA Bill 24/22-27 EFM.**



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