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## BAA Welcomes MPs' Decision to Examine Aggregates Levy

Parliament's influential Northern Ireland Affairs Select Committee this week announced a fresh inquiry into the problems caused by the aggregates levy in Northern Ireland. The announcement follows lobbying and briefing of the committee by the British Aggregates Association (BAA), as well as representations from the quarrying industry in Northern Ireland.

The aggregates levy has caused serious problems for the quarrying industry in Northern Ireland. Reported sales of aggregate have fallen dramatically throughout the region, with millions of tonnes of aggregate instead being brought across the border from the Republic of Ireland, or being sold on the "black market". With the levy being phased in for aggregate used in processed products, the situation is set to worsen.

Commenting on the announcement, Robert Durward, Director of the BAA, said:

"The BAA welcomes the Committee's decision to examine the massive difficulties faced by the quarrying industry in Northern Ireland, as a direct result of the introduction of the levy. One year on from its introduction, the evidence that the levy is proving immensely damaging is clear. It is vital to our members that the Government face up to the damage the levy has caused to the industry - even if this means abandoning the levy in Northern Ireland.

"BAA, along with others in Northern Ireland, has consistently highlighted the many problems caused by the aggregates levy, of which the potential crisis in Northern Ireland's quarrying industry is the most urgent. I hope together we will be able to make the Government see sense."

ENDS

For further information, please contact:

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Notes for Editors:

- The British Aggregates Association is the representative trade body for independent quarrying companies throughout the UK. Formed in 1999, the association has campaigned vigorously against the aggregates levy.
- The terms of reference for the Select Committee inquiry are:
- "To explore the reported difficulties faced by the construction and building supplies industry in Northern Ireland during the phased-in introduction of the aggregates levy; and the long term effects on the industry and economy as a whole."

Further information on the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee is available from their web page, at [http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/northern\\_ireland\\_affairs.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/northern_ireland_affairs.cfm)