



STRONGER TOGETHER

**CONGRESS**

Irish Congress of Trade Unions  
Northern Ireland Committee

30 June 2008

DFP  
Rating Policy Division  
Room D12, Rathgael House  
Balloo Road  
Bangor  
BT19 7NA

**Dear Sir/Madam**

**REVIEW OF DOMESTIC RATING – REDUCTION OF MAXIMUM CAPITAL VALUE**

1. The Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions represents some 33 trade unions with membership in excess of 220,000 workers. These workers reflect the economic and social elements of our community.

The Northern Ireland Committee has consulted widely with its affiliates in regard to the above consultation and the following comments represent the views expressed to the Committee.

2. As stated in our submission of September 2007 (copy attached) in response to the Executive Review of Rating Reform we wish to confirm that Congress is opposed to any cap on rates and supports proposals to reform the rating system to ensure that charges are based on capital values. Clearly we hold to our view that there must be safe guards and relief provided for disadvantaged groups in our society if the cap is removed.
3. Given our previous comments in 2007 we are concerned that Government may proceed to lower the cap. This will not meet the views of the Trade Union Movement and those other organisations who have opposed any capping system. Clearly, even under these Review proposals, the less well off would be expected to more than those in a better off position.
4. It has been clear from our consultations with our affiliates that there is also significant discontent with the manner in which the EQIA has been conducted. In this context we would support calls which have been made for a further EQIA to be conducted. Any new exercise should ensure that all Section 75 groups are included and also allow for a comparison of those groups benefiting from the cap and those not benefiting.

**Yours faithfully**

*Tom Gillen*

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