

STATEMENT FROM:



# BILLY ARMSTRONG MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

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## **Armstrong expresses concern at town parking charges – UUP**

Ulster Unionist Mid Ulster MLA Billy Armstrong has expressed his concern at the proposed extension to thirty towns across Northern Ireland of car parking charges.

Commenting, Billy said:

“As a Party we have already expressed our concern at measures within the Department for Regional Development’s budget relating to the A5 road. The Minister, Conor Murphy, has now put forward a second plan, this time dealing with car parking charges, to which I am completely opposed.

“Both Magherafelt and Cookstown within this constituency are heavily reliant on town centre trade. They are both renown as Market towns and draw in shoppers from the large rural constituency. We have a number of small and well respected businesses who have already suffered as a result of the recession. The impact of charging people for parking within these towns must not be understated. This could prove to be devastating for those businesses locally which barely survived the recession.

“The Department plan to raise £37.5m from this measure across Northern Ireland over the coming four years. However, I am left questioning whether another hole in the Executive’s sham of a budget would exist if people are put off the charges and therefore refuse to park.

“As a region of the UK, people in Northern Ireland are heavily dependent on using their car as a means to go about their daily business. At a time of ever increasing fuel costs, and given the scarcity of public transport in this area, I believe this proposal will come as another kick to local constituents at a time when many can ill afford it.”

ENDS