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For an EU Car Emission & Safety Agency

EMIS inquiry hearing

The revision of the EU type-approval framework for cars is currently being discussed in the European Parliament in the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO). This reform has been put forward by the European Commission in the aftermath of the scandal on diesel emissions and turn-off devices. While the Greens/EFA welcomed the Commission's proposal as a good basis for discussion, we are more sceptical about the draft report presented by MEP Daniel Dalton (European Conservatives and Reformists, ECR UK).

MEP Daniel Dalton has deleted almost all the parts that made the Commission's proposal a rather good proposal. The independence of technical services from car industries has been removed, and random checks by the Commission of vehicles already on our roads have disappeared.

One year after the dieselgate scandal was made public, the Greens/EFA are still fighting for a reliable and independent European type-approval framework. The current European Commission’s proposal is not enough to avoid another dieselgate scandal, but the draft report is outright enabling business as usual, leaving grossly polluting cars on the roads.

The ongoing European Parliament's inquiry on the emission measurements in the automotive sector (EMIS) has revealed a collective responsibility of both Member States and the European Commission. They put definitely too much trust in the car industry to design and perform emissions tests. They turned a blind eye to growing evidence of huge discrepancies between laboratory results and real-world driving emissions, and never had the political will to confront car manufacturers to seek for explanations for obvious breaches of EU law. We need to restore confidence in the European car emission regulation and the automotive sector.

That is why the Greens/EFA are proposing an independent EU vehicle agency with strong power and enough resources to impose market surveillance and confront and sanction manufacturers if needed. Obviously neither the Member States nor the European Commission has handled the dieselgate scandal and air quality with appropriate severity and seriousness. This must change! The idea is not to replace the current system by an EU machinery. But to cut the links between national regulators and car industries, avoid conflict of interests and ensure a level playing field in the European market. Random checks shall be performed on cars that are already on our roads to ensure that everyone respects the same rules, and that the EU emission & safety standards are properly enforced.

72.000 European citizens die prematurely every year because of NO2 exceedances - a toxic gas emitted mainly by diesel cars. In comparison, slightly over 25.000 people lost their lives in road accidents in Europe in 2015. We need to take air quality seriously.

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