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EMIS hearing 16 June 2016

Pascoe Sabido and Olivier Hoedeman, Corporate Europe Observatory 66% of expert groups involved in European Commission's legislative process are industry representatives

The Committee of inquiry into Emission Measurements in the Automotive Sector (EMIS) heard Pascoe Sabido and Olivier Hoedeman as witnesses. Both are representatives of Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO), a Brussels-based non-governmental organisation seeking to expose and challenge the privileged access and influence enjoyed by corporations and their lobby groups in EU policy making. Mr Sabido stated that their investigation on the real driving emissions (RDE) legislative process has shown quite an intense and complex lobbying strategy by the automotive industry, made of threats and undermining of the European Commission's work, in order to delay and weaken the whole legislative package. In addition, he pointed out that 66% of the expert groups involved in the legislative process by the European Commission are representatives of the industry, even if this is the case in most of the fields submitted to regulation, especially when it comes to the fossil fuel industry. Mr Hoedeman then insisted on the lack of transparency in the legislative process, and recommended that all European Commission staff should declare their meetings with lobbies and provide the minutes. CEO's research clearly showed that the European Commission's Directorate-General GROWTH does not respect the European Commission's guidelines on stakeholder consultation which asks civil servants to take minutes of relevant meetings, especially when it is directly linked to a legislative process. Beyond transparency, he said that there must be a very clear political signal from the top of the European Commission to end regulatory capture, and hence reduce dependency on information and expertise coming from the sector that is concerned by the regulation. He mentioned the example of the cabinet of former Commissioner Michel Barnier, who forbade his team to meet lobbyists during three months after the consultation of stakeholders, so that the European Commission could think and work in full independence.

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