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'Better Regulation' is a euphemism and will undermine democracy

Press Release from EFA MEP Ernest Maragall

Catalan MEP and member of the Greens/EFA group **Ernest Maragall** has described the European Commission's new 'Better Regulation' agenda launched this week as a threat to democracy.



The European Commission is presenting its 'Better Regulation' agenda as a way of avoiding unnecessary regulation and making more effective laws.

But critics have warned that the plan is a bureaucratic nightmare that will undermine democracy by shifting power from electing lawmakers to the EU Commission who will undertake 'impact assessments' before new EU laws can come into being.

It could mean deregulation that will undermine important consumer and environmental protections, whilst favouring large corporations.

Ernest Maragall commented:

"The EU has a great talent for euphemism. Earlier the European Commission used the stability and growth pact to undermine the public sector's capacity to secure jobs and sustainable growth; now they are using the banner of 'Better Regulation' to undermine democracy.

"Implementing a permanent consultation process sounds like a way to improve people's engagement in the law

making process, but who apart from big corporations can devote sufficient resources to such an intensive process?

"Paying a wage to elected representatives was a victory for the left in order to guarantee that the voice of the poor and of minorities would be heard. The 'Better Regulation' proposal makes a mockery of this victory.

"What's more, the establishment of an 'independent' scrutiny board above the European Parliament threatens to reduce the Parliament to little more than a consultative think-tank.

"A parliament democratically elected by 400 million people will be scrutinised by three unelected technocrats who will undertake a cost/benefit analysis of any regulation.

"The costs and benefits for who, exactly? And how will this be calculated?

"This 'Better Regulation' proposal is yet more proof that this current European Commission understands the price of everything but the value of nothing.

"Of course some regulations will undermine the profits of big corporations – these tend to be regulations that protect human rights, the environment and public health. Must we sacrifice these hard won protections merely in order to boost the profits of big business?"

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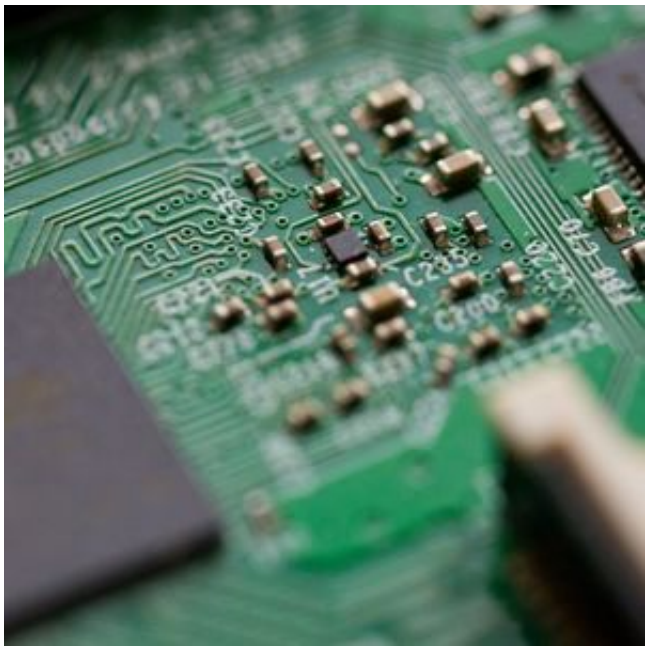


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