Press release | 22.09.2015

Car pollution rules

EU must fix testing loopholes to stop carmakers gaming the system

The European Parliament's environment committee will tomorrow vote on a draft law, updating the EU's Euro 5/6 regulation limiting pollution from road vehicles. The vote takes place amidst revelations that the US Environmental Protection Agency is fining German car manufacturer Volkswagen for falsifying emissions data to comply with US pollutant rules. The problem of car manufacturers abusing the system for testing vehicle emissions has long been known in the EU. A Green proposed amendment to the draft law being voted tomorrow aims to ensure clearly defined EU rules on the test procedure for emissions, which would be based on actual driving conditions (1). Ahead of the vote in the environment committee, Green environment spokesperson **Bas Eickhout** said:

"It has long been an open secret that European carmakers have been ducking the EU's rules to enable them to keep their highly polluting cars on the road. By gaming the test procedure for vehicle emissions, carmakers have kept cars on the road that are multiple factors over the legal pollution limits. This cynical chicanery must end.

"The scandal with Volkswagen in the US on car pollution rules should focus the minds of EU politicians. Exactly the same is happening in Europe. Yet, as we speak, car manufacturers and EU governments are trying to weaken draft rules for a new EU test procedure for car emissions. We expect strong support from the EP's environment committee tomorrow for the Green's proposal to ensure that the new test is implemented as soon as possible and to make certain that no loopholes are being introduced. Parliament must then convince EU governments to accept this measure.

"Air pollution is a silent but prolific killer in Europe and we need to ensure watertight rules to address this problem at its main sources, which includes road vehicles at the top end of the list. We cannot put the short-term profits of the car industry ahead of public health and the impact air pollution has on our health systems and national budgets. Ultimately, it is up to national authorities to ensure car manufacturers do not cheat. Both finally have to start doing their jobs."

1) The European Parliament's environment committee will tomorrow vote on a proposal to update the EU's Euro5/6 regulation, which limits pollutants from road vehicles. A Greens proposed amendment, which is part of a cross-party compromise in the vote, is expected to be adopted. This amendment would mean that the test procedure for measuring pollutant emissions based on actual driving conditions (the so called Real Driving Emissions test) should be in place for 2017 and any deviation from the pollutant limit values should only be to reflect the uncertainty of the testing method. The European Commission had presented a

separate proposal to adapt the testing method via the EU's comitology process, which EU governments and carmakers are trying to water down. The adoption of the amendment by the environment committee would aim to supersede this comitology process and prevent a weak outcome.

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