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End of combustion engines: Commission putting brakes on e-mobility & jeopardising future of European automotive industry

Today, under pressure from Manfred Weber and the European People's Party (EPP), the European Commission has proposed abandoning the plan to phase out combustion engines in its new automotive package. Manufacturers will only have to reduce emissions of their new cars by -90% by 2035, instead of -100%.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA President in the European Parliament, comments:

"We're not helping the car industry by creating more uncertainty. The Commission's desperate attempt to undermine the future of e-cars is a huge mistake. Slamming the brakes on innovation comes at the expense of Europeans and industry. Resulting in more air pollution, health risks, less competitiveness and putting millions of jobs at risk."

"Thanks to the current rules, car makers have finally started putting cheaper electric cars on the market. A change of direction now will only delay the shift to e-cars. Investments in battery production in Europe will be delayed, support mechanisms such as subsidies to help Europeans switch to electric may be at risk, all of this will have a cost for consumers but also for workers in the automotive industry."

"If the Commission's proposal is adopted, the EPP will need to bear responsibility for the decline of the European car industry. This will not stop the electric revolution; the only question is whether the EU will watch from the sidelines or take the lead in e-mobility."

Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA President in the European Parliament, comments:

"The Commission's u-turn is a disaster. Manfred Weber is distracting with a red herring, presenting a

symbolic culture war as economic necessity. Clinging to yesterday's technology is gambling away the EU's future as a car manufacturing hub.

"If the EPP leader has his way, China will lead in the fast lane of global competitiveness. Planning chaos for industry and blocked investments in charging infrastructure and batteries are bad for industry and consumers. European consumers are left out in the cold, with less choice when it comes to affordable European electric models on the market."

More:

The Commission's proposed changes could mean that almost 1 out of 4 new cars put on the EU roads as of 2035 could still be equipped with combustion engines (mostly plug-in hybrids). In doing so, the Commission is creating planning uncertainty, blocking important investment, jeopardising industrial competitiveness, and risking the EU's climate neutrality from 2050 onwards. One ray of hope is the proposal for company fleets, which - if well designed - could boost the sales of electric cars produced in Europe, but also flood the second-hand market with more affordable electric cars in just a few years.

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