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New EU deal on energy efficiency

Press release from SNP MEP Alyn Smith

Scotland's sole representative on the European Parliament's Energy Committee **Alyn Smith MEP** has today hailed a landmark vote in the European Parliament on energy efficiency, ensuring the EU is on course to meet its 2020 target of 20% energy saving, creating jobs and boosting the economy.

The vote endorses the view of the Parliament's Energy Committee, and ensures a number of crucial measures including the legal framework and binding annual targets, many of which had been subject to attempts by member states to backslide on committments.

The Report passed with a massive majority, with some 93% of MEPs approving.

Alyn said:

"Energy efficiency is the low hanging fruit of energy policy, but it is so often overlooked. Worse, some member states appeared more interested in backsliding on the targets they themselves had agreed to when our ambitions will be good for jobs and economy as well as the planet. There are of course short term costs but the savings, and wider economic benefits, are plain to see.

"Today's vote is a hugely important one in ensuring that the EU is on track to meet its 2020 obligations of energy saving, creating jobs and providing a much needed boost to the economy. If I have any criticism of the package it would be that I would like to see it go further.

"The new Energy Efficiency Directive enshrines the EU's 20 per cent energy savings target in a legal framework to meet our targets for 2020. Member States will be responsible for setting out a roadmap for achieving energy savings, and energy companies will be tasked with delivering annual savings across all end-use sectors.

"There has been some opposition to this initiative, including grumblings from the UK Government, yet the package we have adopted today offers considerably more flexibility for Member States than what was initially proposed.

"Of course it is easy to set targets. We now must insure there is swift implementation. Policy at EU and

National level must be reoriented with a view to maximise the benefits of this new legislation, including mobilising European funds which can be used to support energy efficiency and savings, as well as creating training programmes and job opportunities with a view to tackling unemployment.

"Congratulations to my colleague, draftsperson Claude Turmes MEP, for this result."

Notes to Editors:

1) 93+% of MEPs voted today in favour of the Energy Efficiency report by Claude Turmes MEP (632/25/19).

2) The European Council is expected to adopt the same text on 4 October with this new Directive entering into force at the end of this month.

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