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From: Interessengemeinschaft E-Dampfen - M. Calvetti [mc@ig-ed.org]

Sent: Sun 5/5/2013 10:07 PM

To: HARMS Rebecca

Cc:

Subject: E-Cigarette Workshop of the ENVI-Committee on May 7, 2013

Attachments:

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Dear Ms McAvan,

thank you for your invitation to speak at the ENVI Committee workshop on electronic cigarettes on Tuesday 7 May, at which we are looking forward to presenting. However, we have a number of concerns about how the event has been structured that we want to put to you in writing.

We are worried by the makeup of the panel. It is common knowledge that the European Commission and the WHO are opposed to non-medicalised electronic cigarettes, with the WHO often speaking in favour of an outright ban. The national regulators that have been invited are medicinal regulators and are therefore unqualified to speak on any other solution; the European Respiratory Society has a record of misrepresenting its work on electronic cigarettes, resulting in misleading press headlines; and Dr Pisinger has been outspoken in her opposition to electronic cigarettes.

Only our group (and possibly Dr Jean-Francois Etter) will oppose medicinal reclassification, despite the fact that a number of public health experts are strongly opposed to this approach (a list of some experts taking this view can be found as co-signatories to a letter sent by Clive Bates, former director of ASH UK, to the European Parliament). Also, we are not scientific professionals and will be unable to present science arguments as public health experts and clinicians can.

During the consideration of your draft report in Committee, MEPs were clear that they wanted to hear a balanced debate. Your workshop, as it currently stands, will not permit this. We do not object to those who hold different views from presenting. However, we do feel that equal weight should be given to both sides in this debate.

We have been given far less time to prepare than the other participants, made worse by the fact that we are all volunteers with jobs and families to take care of. We will only be permitted to present for five minutes (although we were originally asked to prepare for ten minutes) and the majority of speaking time will be taken up by those in favour of medicinal regulation. We have been asked to do all of this in our second language with no opportunity for translation.

It is right that the voice of the electronic cigarette user is heard and

we will present the consumer perspective at the workshop. It is, however, troubling that you have chosen to address electronic cigarettes – products that have the potential to save millions of lives and are accepted to be 95-99% safer than combustible tobacco – without inviting the views of clinicians and scientists that oppose the Commission's proposals. There is no shortage of credible scientists and researchers who are able and willing to do this.

Finally, we would like to make clear that we agree with the draft opinion of the European Parliament Legal Affairs Committee, which argues that the Commission's proposal would mean an outright ban on electronic cigarettes as we know them today.

We hope that you are able to take our concerns into account over the coming days.

This open letter will also be published on our website.

Yours sincerely

Interessengemeinschaft E-Dampfen

<http://www.IG-ED.org>

cc.

European Ombudsman

Members of the European Parliament Environment and Public Health Committee (ENVI)

Members of the European Parliament Legal Affairs Committee (JURI)

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