

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Dear Vice-President Wieland,

It has come to our attention that you will be meeting European Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and a representative of the Joint Transparency Register Secretariat (JTRS) on Friday 22nd March to discuss the review of the Transparency Register.

We would like to remind you of the fact that the European Parliament in its decision of 11 May 2011 on the common Transparency Register repeated its call "for the mandatory registration of all lobbyists on the Transparency Register and calls for the necessary steps to be taken in the framework of the forthcoming review process in order to prepare for a transition to mandatory registration". We encourage you to defend the Parliament's position at the meeting with Commissioner Šefčovič and would be grateful to receive a detailed report from the meeting. We believe the Parliament should be fully involved in the review process, including through hearings and an indepth assessment by one or more parliamentary committees of the performance of the Transparency Register and the changes needed.

The first two years of the register have clearly shown that the register suffers from major shortcomings that need to be addressed. Due to the voluntary approach, far too many major players in EU lobbying remain unregistered. The conclusion is inescapable: mandatory lobbying disclosure is needed. The information provided by many of those firms and organisations that have registered is very limited and often unreliable, including widespread under-reporting of lobby expenditure. The review should lead to stricter disclosure requirements and new mechanisms to ensure that the register provides high-quality information. We remind you of the European Parliament resolution of 8 May 2008, which called for "full financial disclosure" and for the inclusion of the names of all lobbyists in the register (not only those holding Parliament access passes). We also request the review to pursue improvements to the Code of conduct for lobbyists, which is currently too vaguely worded to effectively secure ethical behaviour. Solving these and other problems will require a renegotiation of the Inter-Institutional Agreement of 11 May 2011 between Parliament and Commission, which means a new Inter-Institutional Working Group should be established.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Jørgensen

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