



To: Members of the ENVI Committee

Re: ENVI vote on the draft report of Mr. Eickhout MEP on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on fluorinated greenhouse gases

Brussels, the 18th of June 2013

Dear Member of the ENVI Committee,

Tomorrow, you will be voting on the draft report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on fluorinated greenhouse gases – [2012/0305\(COD\)](#) – *rapporteur* Mr. Eickhout MEP.

As representatives of patients with allergy, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and of primary care physicians working in the respiratory field, we would like to draw your attention and ask for your support on an important issue for the health of Europeans that should be clarified in the text. In particular, we strongly believe that a **clear exemption for medical applications** should be explicitly foreseen when it comes to the use of hydrofluorocarbons-based metered dose inhalers (HFC-based MDIs).

Asthma and COPD are the most common chronic diseases of the air passages of the lungs and both account for high healthcare expenditure. Treatment of asthma and COPD has increasingly involved inhalation of aerosol medications into lungs and inhaled therapy still remains the mainstay for these diseases. Inhalers deliver drugs directly to the airways. Even though there are three types of inhalers, not all patients can use dry powder devices, particularly those with reduced inspiratory effort. As a result, **HFC-based MDIs continue to be necessary to adequate treatment of some people with respiratory diseases, especially in children, elderly people and in the severe stages of these diseases.**

While being fully committed to the protection of the environment, we believe that **any consideration of policy measures to control HFCs should carefully assess implications to patients' health and have the goal of maintaining a range of therapeutic options for all patients, including the most vulnerable ones.** EFA and IPCRG therefore urge EU policy makers not to take further measures against medical use of HFC MDIs in order to ensure availability of MDIs for patients who need them until affordable and safe alternatives and technical solutions are available for patients in all MS. The asthma and COPD patient associations as well as medical organisations should also be fully informed about planned developments so they can play their part in informing and reassuring patients in their respective countries.

Please support **amendment 82: “This regulation shall not apply to medical applications which are of critical use, where no suitable alternative exists, or where such alternatives cannot be used for technical, economic or safety reasons”**.

We urge you to take the above-mentioned concerns into account for your vote in June. We thank you in advance for your availability and support.

Yours sincerely,

Breda Flood
EFA President

Niels Chavannes
IPCRG President

The European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients’ Associations (EFA) is a non-profit network of allergy, asthma and COPD patients organisations, representing 35 national associations in 22 countries and over 400,000 patients. EFA is dedicated to making Europe a place where people with allergies, asthma and COPD have the right to best quality of care and safe environment, live uncompromised lives and are actively involved in all decisions influencing their health.
www.efanet.org

The International Primary Care Respiratory Group (IPCRG) is a primary care non-governmental organisation with a special interest in long term lung conditions such as tobacco dependence, COPD, asthma and allergic rhinitis with a philanthropic mission to share and spread evidence for the public good. It is both an organisation of organisations and a multi-national community of practice across Europe. We develop and mobilise national groups whose members are primary and community healthcare professionals with a respiratory interest. We initiate networking between colleagues sharing similar practical and research questions, data and learning about the prevention, diagnosis and management of long term lung conditions in low, middle and high income countries.
www.theipcr.org