

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UK Member of Parliament Stephen McPartland hosts European allergy and respiratory patient leaders at the House of Commons**

**Brussels, 2 June 2016** – EFA’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) dinner gathered more than 40 allergy and respiratory patient leaders from 25 European countries at the UK House of Commons, hosted by Member of Parliament Stephen McPartland last May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. McPartland, a patient himself, chairs the Allergy, the Respiratory Health and the Child Health and Vaccine Preventable Diseases All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) at the UK House of Commons.

Stephen McPartland, Member of Parliament for Stevenage, said, “I was delighted to host these groups at the House of Commons to help raise awareness of the hidden costs of these conditions to patients, their families, carers, and European health systems. It was a very poignant day, as a restaurant owner was jailed for six years for manslaughter of a customer who died of an allergic reaction”.

EFA, the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients’ Associations who co-organized the meeting, is an umbrella organisation representing one third of the European population, who live with allergy, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

EFA’s newly elected, President Mikaela Odemyr said: “Our reception in the House of Commons is an example of European collaboration to improve access to quality care for allergy and respiratory patients. We can only find a cure for these diseases if we pull efforts together linking the national and European levels. EFA, together with healthcare professionals, is helping the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to run the Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma, a transversal platform to tackle allergy and asthma”.

One third of the European population live with allergy and 70 million suffer from asthma. COPD accounts for half of the economic burden of lung disease of 141.4 billion EUR.

EFA’s AGM was hosted by EFA Members Allergy UK and Asthma UK.

Allergy UK’s CEO, Carla Jones said: “It is such a pleasure for Allergy UK to host EFA’s Annual General Meeting. By uniting patient groups across Europe we can influence policies collectively and make direct changes for people with allergies. Not only here in the UK, but all over Europe and by working together we help translate European regulations and initiatives to a national level and thereby making a direct difference for people in the UK.”



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Asthma UK Managing Director of External Affairs and EFA's Board Member, Dan Murphy said: "We were delighted to co-host the EFA AGM, where patient groups from across Europe signed a declaration to call on their own governments and the EU to increase investment into asthma research to help stop asthma attacks and cure asthma."

### Notes to editors:

**The European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA)** is an alliance of 41 allergy, asthma and COPD patients' organisations in 25 European countries and it works for European patients with allergy, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) to live uncompromised lives, have the right and access to the best quality care and a safe environment.

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