



Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe
Council of European Municipalities and Regions

To the members of the
Constitutional Affairs Committee
in the European Parliament

Brussels, 31 March 2008

Vote on the Stubb report on 1 April 2008: Paragraph 8 [regions and municipalities]

Dear Member of the Constitutional Affairs Committee,

I am writing to you with regard to the Alexander Stubb report "on the development of the framework for the activities of interest representatives (lobbyists) in the European institutions", on which you will be voting tomorrow, Tuesday 1 April.

We understand that the topic is a sensitive issue and we share the Commission and Parliament's view that there is a need and an interest to regulate to some extent the activities of interest representatives.

However, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) as the European umbrella organisation of national associations representing local and regional government, is concerned about paragraph 8, on the treatment of lobbyists. As the paragraph stands today, it considers representatives of regional and local government as being of the same nature as professional lobbyist, companies, NGOs, etc.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that local and regional authorities and their elected representatives are in line with democratic principles, they are organised in a transparent and accountable way and thus dispose of a legitimacy, which we believe distinguishes them from other lobbyists that follow purely or mainly commercial, financial, professional or single-issue interests. We are aware that an amendment has been tabled on this issue (Amendment 43) and that a compromise text is being proposed for paragraph 8, both of which we support.

Therefore, we would like to ask you to support the following compromise amendment on paragraph 8:

8. “Emphasises that all actors, *both public and private interest representatives, outside the European institutions* falling within that definition *and regularly influencing the institutions* should be considered as lobbyists and treated in the same way: professional lobbyists, companies' in-house lobbyists, NGOs, ~~think-tanks~~, trade associations, trade unions and employers' organisations, *profit-making and non-profit organisations* and lawyers when their purpose is to influence policy rather than case-law *or to give legal advice; stresses also, however, that regions and municipalities of the Member States, as well as political parties at national and European level and those bodies which have a legal status in the Treaties do not fall within the scope of these rules when they are acting according to the role and the tasks of the represented bodies foreseen in the Treaties;*

We strongly welcome the reference to regions and municipalities in amendment 43 and the new compromise amendment, we still feel, however, that there is a potential ambiguity concerning the status of European and national associations of local and regional government. Our preference would therefore be for the final sentence to read (our modification is underlined):

“...stresses also, however, that regions and municipalities of the Member States, and their representative associations, as well as political parties at national and European level and those bodies which have a legal status in the Treaties do not fall within the scope of these rules when they are acting according to the role and the tasks of the represented bodies foreseen in the Treaties;”

We would be grateful if you could take our view into consideration. For further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me (e-mail: Angelika.Poth-Moegele@ccre-cemr.org; tel. 02 5000540).

Yours sincerely



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Director of Policy

