

Brussels, 29/03/2010
Ares/2010/165967

Mr Bernard Durkan
Chairman of the Joint Committee on
European Affairs
Houses of the Oireachtas

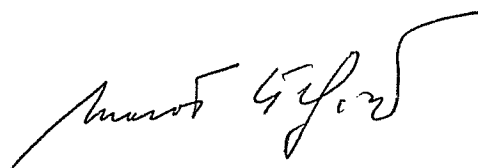
Dear Chairman,

The Commission welcomes the interest of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on European Affairs in the European citizens' initiative {COM(2009)622} and is grateful for the contribution to the Green Paper you transmitted on 24 February 2010. These comments will provide valuable input to the Commission in preparing its legislative proposal on this matter.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the next steps that the Commission intends to take in preparing its proposal. Following the conclusion of the public consultation on European citizens' initiative on 31st January 2010, the Commission is currently analysing the more than 300 contributions that it has received¹. The Commission has also, as you may know, organised a Stakeholder Hearing on this matter on 22nd February 2010, in order to have an exchange of views with stakeholders on the key issues to be addressed by the forthcoming regulation on the citizens' initiative.

On the basis of the outcome of the hearing and of its analysis of the contributions, the Commission is preparing a proposal for a regulation. The Commission intends to adopt its proposal at the end of March 2010 and hopes that an early agreement with the European Parliament and the Council can be reached so that citizens can start benefiting from this new right as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,



¹ All responses to the Green Paper have been published on the Commission's website at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/citizens_initiative/index_en.htm