



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 8.6.2017
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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senato della Repubblica for its Opinion on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work {COM(2017) 11 final}.

The proposal aims to improve workers' health protection by reducing occupational exposure to carcinogenic chemical agents, to provide more clarity and to contribute to a level playing field for economic operators.

In proposing these measures, the Commission is making good on the promise in its 2016 Work Programme to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the European Union framework for protecting workers. The intention is also to continue this important work and to conduct further impact assessments with a view to proposing limit values for additional carcinogens.

The Commission took a first step to address these issues by adopting on 13 May 2016 a legislative proposal to amend Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work with a view to revise or to introduce exposure limit values for 13 chemical agents {COM(2016) 248 final}. The Commission is now taking a further step in a longer-term process of updating the Directive with regard to seven more carcinogens and proposes to establish limit values and/or skin notations. According to the impact assessment this is estimated to result in increased protection for at least 4 million workers and improved clarity for employers and enforcers. Together it is estimated that both proposals would prevent over 100,000 deaths caused by work-related cancer.

The Commission is pleased that the Senato della Repubblica shares the view that action at the European Union's level as envisaged in the proposal is required to raise the level of protection of workers' health and respects the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

*Mr. Pietro Grasso
President of the Senato della Repubblica
Piazza Madama
I - 00186 ROMA*

The Senato della Repubblica's Opinion has been made available to the Commission's representatives in the ongoing negotiations with the co-legislators and we have taken due notice of the statements in the Opinion.

Discussions between the Commission and the co-legislators concerning the proposal are now underway and the Commission remains hopeful that an agreement will be reached in the near future.

The Commission is grateful for the input provided by the Senato della Repubblica and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Marianne Thyssen
Member of the Commission*