



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Vice-President of the European Commission with responsibility for transport
Siim Kallas

Member of Cabinet

Brussels, **05. 03. 2014**
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Mr Marc HUYBRECHTS
President, CLECAT

By E-Mail:
nicollettevdjagt@clecat.org

Mr Denis CHOUMERT
President, ESC

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Mr François COART
President, ERFA

By E-Mail:
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Dear Mr Huybrecht,
Dear Mr Choumert,
Dear Mr Couart,

I would like to thank you for the open letter dated 10 February 2014 addressed to all Members of the European Parliament in which you express your support to the 4th railway package.

You called for a strong positive vote in plenary session in support of the work done by the six rapporteurs and the TRAN Committee. The 4th railway package is indeed a vital initiative to promote rail transport and make sure this environmentally friendly mode of transport takes its full place in a European efficient transport system. It is a coherent and comprehensive initiative that foresees domestic market opening of passenger services, mandatory award of public services contracts by tendering procedure, the strengthening of the European Rail Agency in order to simplify procedures for safety certification and interoperability authorisations of vehicles as well as rules on the governance of infrastructure managers to guarantee fair access to the rail network.

The support of your organisations, CLECAT, ERFA and ESC, is very important for the success of our initiative and a very strong political signal from the main clients and users of rail freight. The discussions in the European Parliament in particular on governance aspects demonstrate the difficulty to reform the rail sector. You are indeed best placed to

know that reform is needed to enable rail freight to develop, thus contributing to jobs and growth in Europe.

I can assure you that the Commission will continue to plead for ambitious actions in favour of rail transport and strong commitment to translate the 4th railway package into a Single European Rail Area as soon as possible. Market opening will be a success and lead to more services of better quality, only if markets function well. In the legislative procedure, the Commission will continue to draw the attention of co-legislators to the necessity of solid separation requirements to ensure the independence of the infrastructure managers. It is also important to have clearly separate financial circuits between infrastructure management and transport operation, in order to prevent cross-subsidies which may distort competition between railway operators. The role of regulators needs to be strengthened in order to guarantee well-functioning markets.

Finally, I would like to add that the 4th railway package goes hand in hand with other policy initiatives in favour of rail transport, namely the launch of the Shift2Rail initiative to boost research and innovation and the Connecting Europe Facility to promote an efficient infrastructure network across Europe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Juhan Lepassaar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Juhan LEPASSAAR