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PRESS REVIEW

“Sabotage of the European Railway Reform”

“Sabotage of the European railway reform.” The words come from independent freight operators, logisticians and customers (shippers) concerned about how the 4th European Railway Package could unfold. A crucial vote is to be taken in the European Parliament in a few days, when the transport committee is to adopt its eagerly anticipated first reading reports on the reform on 17 December. **According to ERFA (European Rail Freight Association), CLECAT (the European association for forwarding, transport, logistics and customs services), and ESC (the European Shippers’ Council, which represents large industrial clients),** -- all of which are calling for more competition and therefore a strong railway package – last minute amendments were apparently submitted, which could undermine the arduous efforts to reach compromises on the policy pillar of the package (governance of railway companies and competition). These associations speak of a real *“step backward”* on the essential points of the reform such as the guarantees for independence of infrastructure managers, relations between managers and historical operators in holdings, financial transparency, etc.

These amendments – which evidently have the support of the CER, which represents the historical operators – were purportedly submitted in recent days in Strasbourg, where the MEPs, who are put under great pressure, are in plenary session. They could snatch precious votes from the drafted compromises on these aspects which part of the S&D and EPP groups may already refuse to support. **ERFA, CLECAT and ESC have already made their displeasure known to MEPs in an open letter.**

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