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SME UNION President Leitl: EU emission trading package expels industry from Europe and reinforces recession tendencies

“The vote of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament on the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS) has been a great disappointment for the European economy. Against the warnings of business it was decided to burden the industry already from 2013 on with CO₂-fees which never can be carried out”, criticized SME UNION President Christoph Leitl on Tuesday. “The logical consequence is that businesses including small and medium-sized enterprises will be forced to move away from Europe.” The European Parliament Environment Committee supported an auction based emission trading scheme for industry as of 2013 when MEPs voted in the first reading to include all industry sectors in the obligation to auction emission certificates and therefore clearly missed the chance for a practical solution.

„Enterprises, which will face massive burdens in a few years, will not invest in Europe anymore, but will shift their investments to other areas. We already feel the effects, because many concerned enterprises have suspended their investment plans for now, until the necessary disburdening signals come from Brussels”, explained the SME UNION President. Europe will face tough burdens while America and China’s industries will enjoy a lighter regime.

Our EPP-ED and SME Circle MEPs, almost without exceptions, would have preferred and suggested a benchmark system allocating to the most up-to-date producers with the most current state of the art technology free of charge certificates. “This system would not punish those who have already invested and would motivate the others to follow those examples”, explained the SME UNION President. “We are in favor of climate protection, but the tools must be right. This very unrealistic climate policy is doomed to failure. Especially against the background of the current financial turmoil and hence resulting recession tendencies I would have expected a stronger sense of responsibility from the Members of the European Parliament. We have to undertake everything in order to prevent this irresponsible burden. I cannot and will not accept a deindustrialization of Europe”, concluded SME UNION President Leitl.

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SME UNION (Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Union) of the EPP (European People’s Party) is the network of pro-business Christian-Democrat, Conservative and Liberal politicians and political organizations. Its main objective is to help in shaping EU policy in a more SME friendly way. www.sme-union.org