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COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS AND THE INTERNAL MARKET
CHAIRMAN

Mr Pat Cox
President
European Parliament
PHS 11B 011
Brussels

Dear Mr President,

As you will know, since 17 March 2000 the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal market, and its rapporteur Mr Toine MANDERS, have been dealing with environmental responsibility on the basis initially of a Green Paper and subsequently of a Commission proposal, which was referred to it on 11 March 2002, in its capacity as the committee responsible. In the framework of the annual programme, it was agreed a long time ago that the committee would hold a public hearing on this proposal on 21 May this year.

Today I have been informed that subsequent to a conflict of competence raised by the Committee on the Environment, the working group of the three Vice-Presidents in charge has recommended changing the referral

I consider it as my duty to draw your attention to the fact that a change in the attribution of this legislative proposal at the present stage of the procedure would create extremely adverse political consequences. Furthermore, as I have already pointed out in my previous letters, on the basis of Annex VI of our Rules of Procedure, it is fully justified to maintain the lead competence of the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Internal Market for this piece of legislation which deals mainly with civil liability law.

I would, therefore, strongly recommend to the Conference of Presidents that it should consider carefully the strong political and legal implications involved before taking a decision on the recommendation by the three Vice-Presidents.

Yours sincerely,

Giusep 
