

Amsterdam, 11 November 2008

Dear Susanna Karlsson (political assistant to MEP Piiia-Noora Kauppi),

On behalf of the organisers of the Worst EU Lobby Awards, please pass on our congratulations to Mrs. Kauppi with the birth of her child last month!

Thank you very much for your response to Mrs. Kauppi's nomination for the Worst Conflict of Interest Award. We regret that we have not received any response from you to our request last week for "statements made by Mrs. Kauppi to the ECON committee or the wider European Parliament regarding her new job and measures she would take to prevent conflicts of interest", a request that was sparked by the fact that no such references can be found on the European Parliament website nor anywhere else in the public domain.

Allow us to underline that the nomination for the Worst Conflict of Interest Award reflects our concerns about MEPs going through the revolving door to become corporate lobbyists. The European Parliament lacks basic rules to prevent conflicts of interest in this field, for instance a 'cooling off period' for MEPs. We believe it would also be highly advisable to introduce transparency obligations around employment negotiations for future jobs.

You mention that Mrs. Kauppi has declared that she will not embark on "rapporteurships on topics which are directly linked to the interests of her future employer". We note that this information is also not in the public domain, and would argue that this pledge is not sufficient to prevent conflicts of interest. Instead it would be advisable for MEPs to abstain – from the beginning of employment negotiations – to abstain from participating in Parliament debates on topics on which their future employer has a commercial interest.

Mrs. Kauppi has indeed, as you mention, resigned her full membership of the Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) committee and is now 'only' a substitute member of the committee. She did attend two ECON committee meetings shortly after her new job was announced in a press release from the Federation of Finnish Financial Services (FFFS) in June, but what strikes us as problematic is that Mrs. Kauppi has continued to act as a member of the ECON committee also after the summer break. Mrs. Kauppi spoke on several occasions in September in the European Parliament's plenary on issues of direct commercial interest to her new employer. As far as we can judge, Mrs. Kauppi failed to ensure on these occasions that her colleagues knew that she had signed a job contract with the Federation of Finnish Financial Services. On September 10th, moreover, Mrs. Kauppi issued [a press release on the report on the future structure of financial supervision in the EU](#) that had been approved that day by the ECON committee.

Later that month, Mrs. Kauppi also [spoke at a high-profile industry conference on the EU's regulatory system for financial services](#), again as a member of the Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs committee.

We moreover note that Mrs. Kauppi's ['MEP profile'](#) on the European Parliament website does not mention her contract with the FFFS, nor does her ['Declaration of financial interests'](#).

For these reasons, we believe Mrs. Kauppi remains a most relevant candidate for the 'Worst Conflicts of Interest' Award 2008.

Yours sincerely,

Olivier Hoedeman

On behalf of the organisers of the 'Worst EU Lobbying' Awards 2008
(Corporate Europe Observatory, Friends of the Earth Europe, LobbyControl and Spinwatch)