

Your Address

MEP Address

Date

Dear xxxxxxxx

We write regarding the amended Working-Time proposals which will soon be debated in the European Parliament.

The Common Position, agreed at a meeting of the Employment Council on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008, retains the right for individuals to opt-out of the 48 hour maximum working week should they wish to do so. It also contains protections which ensure that those individuals who choose not to sign the opt-out are not treated unfavorably as a result.

It is essential for our business, and the employees who rely upon it, that these provisions are retained in the final text of the Directive.

Not all those who sign the opt-out regularly work more than 48 hours per week, but it is vital they are free and able to do so when necessary, to meet any fluctuations in demand or contribute to specific projects requiring short periods of high intensity work. Given the increasingly challenging economic climate, a decision to remove the opt-out would significantly reduce the flexibility of our business, and our ability to adapt to the pressures these circumstances generate.

Such a decision would also remove a source of competitive advantage that has been crucial in allowing our business, and many others including our suppliers across the UK, to prosper and grow in recent years. During very difficult times, the overtime income, which the opt-out allows, is a valuable way of supplementing family income if employees wish to do so. These employees are protected against exploitation through the voluntary nature of the opt-out.

Additionally, we believe that losing the opt-out would significantly reduce the attractiveness of the UK as a place to do business.

**Please add a section here on the importance of the opt-out in your sector and for your business.**

We strongly urge you **not to amend** the Common Position as agreed by the Employment Council in June, when the European Parliament votes in Plenary in December.

Please feel free to contact me directly should you wish to discuss any of this further.

Yours sincerely

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