

19 June 2018

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Mr. Frans Timmermans  
First Vice President  
European Commission

Dear Mr. Timmermans,

I am delighted to notice that you and the commission have recently shown such a great deal of interest in and commitment to strengthening the principle of subsidiarity within the European Union, most explicitly of course in the task force on subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently. I strongly agree with you that this is an important subject, and I'm sure that you are aware of the efforts the Swedish Riksdag makes to ensure a serious and efficient engagement with questions regarding subsidiarity. The Riksdag performs a subsidiarity check of all draft legislative acts not falling within the exclusive competence of the union. As I have pointed out in other contexts, it is not only an opportunity but also a responsibility for national parliaments to make full use of the powers given to us in the Treaty of Lisbon. It is a question of democracy and legitimacy.

In the recent weeks, the commission has transmitted to the national parliaments an unprecedented number of proposals for subsidiarity checks. Since 1 May, 52 proposals have been referred to the committees of the Riksdag and several more are foreseen to be referred in the coming days and weeks. Such a large quantity of proposals in such a short time makes a serious and engaged assessment of each individual proposal considerably more difficult. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to point out that if the parliament had access to early, reliable and detailed information about when the commission plans to put forward individual proposals, such information would give the Riksdag better possibilities to carry out the responsibilities that follow from the Treaty of Lisbon and our constitution. Similarly, the commission has been invited on several occasions, most recently in the contribution of the LIX Cosac, to explore an extension of the 8-week deadline and to consider excluding further periods from the 8-week deadline. In my view, in a situation such as the present one additional time could be an excellent tool to ensure that the quality of the subsidiarity checks remains high.

Yours sincerely,



Urban Ahlin  
Speaker of the Riksdag

Talmannen