

Commissioner Erkki Liikanen  
DG Enterprise and Information Society  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B – 1049 Brussels  
Belgium

19 January 2001

Dear Commissioner Liikanen

### **Safer Car Fronts for Pedestrians and Cyclists**

I am writing with regard to current Commission proposals on safer car fronts for pedestrians and cyclists. I have been contacted by a number of constituents regarding this matter which is clearly a significant road safety issue for the European institutions at this time.

Community legislation on safer car fronts has been promised by the present and the previous Commission as far back as 1993. In March last year the Commission stated its intention to introduce legislation on safer car fronts as one of its priorities in its Communication on road safety, and both the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament expressed their support for this. It is estimated by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) that approximately 2000 deaths and 18 000 serious injuries would be prevented in the EU each year if all cars on EU roads were made to meet the standards set down by the four crash tests put forward by the European Enhanced Safety of Vehicles Committee (EESVC) in order to achieve safer car fronts for 'vulnerable road users'.

I understand however that you are now offering motor manufacturers the option of a voluntary agreement on safer car fronts, and have given them until June of this year to negotiate such an agreement. So far discussions on such a voluntary agreement have included proposals for fewer and weaker car crash tests. I believe a voluntary agreement would not deliver the high level of protection needed.

As EU-funded research into pedestrian protection through car design was begun in 1978, as the Commission made commitments to legislation on safer car fronts in 1993, and as the present discussions on the proposals have gone on for over 12 months, I would urge you to publish immediately a draft legislative proposal on safer car fronts for pedestrians and cyclists. I would ask you also to make this continuing debate fully open and transparent, in accordance with EU Treaty principles, as it cannot be said to have been so far. Those of us with a particular concern to increase road safety have had no access to discussions between the Commission and industry representatives on this matter.

I believe a speedy and resolute proposal for legislation in this area would save the lives of many citizens.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Lucas MEP