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EPBD: European Parliament's ITRE Committee right on target – an important signal for Clean Energy for All Europeans!

The European Parliament's ITRE Committee has this morning adopted with a broad majority the well-balanced Draft Report of Rapporteur MEP Bendt Bendtsen on the European Commission's proposal for an amended Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). As the first legislative file of the Clean Energy Package voted by the ITRE Committee, this sends an important signal in favour of a forward-looking agenda that can modernise Europe's energy system, deliver benefits to both consumers and industry, and help the EU achieve its international climate goals.

For Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, the outcome of this vote is a very welcome development. "Considering the undisputed role that buildings play in reaching our energy and climate targets," commented Director General Adrian Harris, "it is imperative to balance out the shortcomings of the Commission's proposal and the very disappointing general approach presented by the Council in June." Mr. Harris thanked the Rapporteur and his counterparts in other political groups for restoring the right level of ambition for the final Directive.

By unlocking the untapped energy efficiency potential of buildings, an ambitious EPBD review can enhance quality of life for EU citizens while providing new opportunities to European technology firms. "Today's vote lays the groundwork to make this goal a reality," remarked Mr. Harris, "as it prioritises renovation of the existing building stock, embraces the innovation offered by technical building systems, and puts in place determined long-term renovation strategies." Significant progress has also been made on the development of a smartness indicator to assess a building's technological readiness; however, further clarification on this point would be a welcome next step.

Orgalime is now strongly encouraging policy makers to carry the ambition expressed in the vote through to the final Directive to be negotiated with the Council. "A determined, forward-looking EPBD review that encourages roll-out of the relevant technical building systems – and energy management infrastructure and technologies in particular – is an unmissable opportunity," concludes Mr. Harris. "This would not only support the EU's Paris climate goals, but would also help consumers manage energy consumption, accelerate integration of renewables, and contribute to the development of e-vehicle charging infrastructures – enabling the emergence of a modern, flexible electricity grid that can accommodate both centralised and decentralised production."

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Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 41 trade federations representing the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 23 European countries. The industry employs nearly 11 million people in the EU and in 2016 accounted for some €2,000 billion of output. The industry represents over a quarter of the output of manufactured products and over a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.

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