Dear Ms Walley,

The President of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, has asked me to thank you for your letter of 15 December 2014 expressing your concerns in relation to the package proposals on circular economy and on improving air quality, in the context of the preparation of the Commission work programme for 2015. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to you.

On 16 December 2014, the Commission adopted its work programme (COM(2014) 910 final) and provided further clarifications on this matter on the occasion of the presentation of the work programme to the European Parliament on the day of its adoption.

In the meantime, the Commission formalised the decision to withdraw the waste review proposal in its meeting of 25 February 2015 to make way in 2015 for a more ambitious approach that can be more effective.

While a revised waste proposal will take better account of the situation in the various Member States, the broader approach to the circular economy wants to address all elements of the cycle, inter alia looking at supporting better product design and sustainable consumption on the one hand, and facilitating the development of a market for recycled products and raw materials on the other hand.

Ms Joan WALLEY, MP  
Chair  
Environmental Audit Committee  
House of Commons  

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The Commission is fully aware of the importance of environmental and economic challenges related to the circular economy. Therefore, the development of the circular economy is supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds and falls entirely within the scope of the European fund for strategic investments recently proposed by the Commission under the new investment plan.

President Juncker has asked Vice President Jyrki Katainen, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, in close collaboration with myself, responsible for Better Regulation, Inter-institutional Relations, Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and Commissioners Vella and Bienkowska, to implement the Commission’s decision taken in the context of the adoption of the work programme.

As for the package on air quality, the Commission does not envisage withdrawing it, but to present, in the course of the ongoing negotiations, a modified proposal for the National Emission Ceilings Directive, taking into account the developing positions of the co-legislators, reflecting synergies with the energy and climate policy and reducing administrative burden while not compromising on the goals to attain.

I hope these elements clarify your concerns and I remain available to continue the discussion on the best way to achieve on our economic and environmental objectives.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Frans TIMMERMANS