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Mrs. Adina-Ioana Vălean, MEP
Chair Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Mrs. Cecilia Wikström, MEP
Chair Committee on Petitions

European Parliament
1047 Brussels
BELGIUM

Machelen, 20 March, 2019

Dear Chairs,

I write regarding a joint hearing of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee and the Petitions Committee proposed for March 21, 2019 on the topic of "Climate Change Denial."

We respect the important role your Committees play in responding directly to citizen concerns on important policy issues. We therefore believe it is important to provide you with the following information.

Last month, a representative of the Committees inquired whether ExxonMobil might be able to participate in the upcoming hearing. We explained that, unfortunately, we are constrained from participating because of ongoing climate litigation in the United States. That litigation includes a civil enforcement action brought by the Attorney General of the State of New York that is scheduled to go to trial later this year, as well as a class-action shareholder lawsuit and climate-related tort suits in various stages of litigation throughout the country. We expressed concern that public commentary, such as would be elicited at the hearing, could prejudice those pending proceedings. The Committees' representative acknowledged ExxonMobil's response by stating that she "unders[oo]d completely" ExxonMobil's position.

ExxonMobil regrets its inability to participate in the hearing, but we are confident that a neutral review of the facts will refute the allegations made by the company's critics that are distortions of ExxonMobil's nearly 40-year history of climate research.

ExxonMobil has long acknowledged that risks related to climate change are real and warrant action. ExxonMobil has participated in the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change since its inception, and contributed to every report issued by the organization since 1995. There are few challenges more important than meeting the world's growing demand for energy while reducing environmental impacts and the risks of climate change. We support the 2015 Paris Agreement, and we believe that it will take all of us – businesses, governments, and consumers – to make meaningful progress on this issue. ExxonMobil is committed to doing our part to help society meet this dual challenge. Our recently released 2019 Energy and Carbon

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Summary, which is available at <https://exxonmobil.co/2E08IPk>, provides more detailed information about our actions to address the risks of climate change and prepare for a lower-carbon future.

We understand that the hearing is likely to include a panel discussion on “Communication Techniques and Misinformation – the Exxon Mobil Case” featuring Geoffrey Supran. Supran is a co-author of an inaccurate article accusing ExxonMobil of misleading the public. To support this claim, Supran and his co-author relied on a communication analysis method developed by Dr. Kimberly Neuendorf, and his article references her textbook on the subject.

As you prepare for this panel discussion, it would be worthwhile to read Dr. Neuendorf’s response to the Supran article. Her February 22, 2018 report, commissioned by ExxonMobil, was filed as an expert report in pending legal proceedings in the United States. The report, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter, concludes that Supran’s “content analysis does not support the study’s conclusions because of a variety of fundamental errors” that are “fatal to its principal findings.” One of those fundamental errors is that Supran and his co-author largely compared internal documents of one company (Exxon Corporation) with the contemporaneous public statements of another (Mobil Oil Corporation) to determine whether there was a discrepancy between them. Their illogical comparison entirely obscured the separateness of the two corporations and ignored that, before November 1999, Exxon and Mobil were distinct companies; they were incorporated and headquartered in different states and did not share management or employees. Dr. Neuendorf’s thorough dismantling of the Supran article provides essential context for any allegations Supran might lodge at the hearing.

Thank you for understanding the sensitivity of our current situation. As you may be aware, ExxonMobil has operated in Europe for more than a century and we continue to contribute substantially to the European economy. We have approximately 14,000 European employees across 16 EU member states, and invested more than €10 billion in Europe between 2013 and 2017.

We respect the pivotal role your Committees play in the European Parliament. We will follow up directly with your office to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,



Nikolaas Baeckelmans
Vice President European Union Affairs