Executive Vice-President of the European Commission
Mr. Frans Timmermans
Commissioner for Transport
Ms. Adina Vălean
Commissioner for Environment
Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius
Commissioner for the Internal Market
Mr. Thierry Breton
Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
Ms. Elisa Ferreira

Date

Dear Executive Vice-President, dear Commissioners,

Biomethane: an essential part of circular cities and regions in Europe

Subject: EU cities call for EU recognition and support for a circular city approach with biomethane transport fuels from organic waste streams

We, co-signed European municipalities, regions, and cities, are committed to the objective of climate neutrality by 2050, set by the European Union. The circular city concept is essential to make sure our municipalities become more sustainable, developing the local economy, creating jobs, protecting our environment and the wellbeing of our citizens. Biogas is a true enabler of a circular economy: we can produce biogas by treating local organic waste and municipal waste water and this renewable gas can be used to fuel both our public transport and private fleets (once upgraded to biomethane), facilitating the access of all to sustainable mobility. **EU cities and regions should be encouraged to develop integrated circular city concepts and make an optimal use of their resources.**

While supporting the roll out of green electric transport infrastructure, we request the European Union institutions to allow us to promote, on a level-playing field, other alternative options like renewable gas mobility, as essential local decarbonisation tools. This will enable our municipalities to turn local waste into a local resource, producing a renewable fuel particularly adapted to the public transport and industry mobility needs.

Biomethane production is an optimal way to valorise local bio waste streams in our territories. It is estimated that within Europe already more than 350 municipalities are successfully producing biomethane from their organic waste streams. Waste is the second biggest source of methane emissions in the EU. Besides its positive contribution to reduce GHG emissions, the anaerobic digestion of organic waste and residues produces digestate, which is an excellent organic fertiliser. As such, biomethane is an essential part of a truly sustainable circular territory approach.

The production of biomethane can support the decarbonisation of local transport modes. Municipal transport, regional transport services and private fleets are using this renewable fuel in buses, waste collection trucks, vans, lorries and other local transport modes. Biomethane can replace conventional fuels across in all its diverse uses. The use of biomethane in transport, alone or combined with green electricity, can reduce emissions even below zero levels. It also reduces significantly noise and air pollution compared to diesel, helping us develop more sustainable and healthy urban areas.

Renewable gas mobility is a readily available and cost-competitive alternative to fossil fuels, which can support the decarbonization of local mobility. This has a positive impact on the public transport services offered to our citizens. It is also a clean mobility option for many local jobs relying on the use of professional vehicles, including delivery, gardening or home repair services, etc.

An increasing number of municipalities throughout Europe prove the significant contribution of biomethane vehicles and fleets towards CO2 emissions savings in the transport sector. This, added to its positive contribution to municipal organic waste management, makes cities and municipalities more sustainable.

We are worried that a sole focus on electric mobility could stop the deployment of other clean mobility alternatives, such as biomethane, and its related benefits within our local circular economies. This could eventually lead to the unwanted hindrance of efficient capturing of methane emissions from our waste streams in the near future.

Therefore, we strongly advocate for the future use of biomethane as a transport fuel to make circular economy a reality in our cities. We would like to put forward the following requests:

- Ensure that future infrastructure policy specifically recognises and supports the role of biomethane in local transport.
- Direct green investments to technologies that bring the highest emissions savings on a well-to-wheel / Life Cycle Analysis basis as this is fully line with a circular city approach.
- Support future public procurement for gas vehicles fueled with increasing shares of biomethane.

The forthcoming revisions of key pieces of legislation, such the Renewable Energy Directive, the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive, the CO2 emission performance standards for cars and vans and the Euro 7 standards, provide a great opportunity to foster our efforts for the implementation of a truly circular approach in our municipalities, including the important role of biomethane as a local and sustainable transport fuel. We strongly suggest to embrace this approach in the upcoming legislations.

Yours sincerely,

Signatory cities:

Insert signatories *Regional Council of South Karelia, Regional Council of Central Finland, City of Jyväskylä.*

Signatory organisations:

Insert signatories

- Waste Water Treatment plant

- Biowaste digestion plant

- Use of biomethane in local public transport

- Use of biomethane in local garbage trucks

Contact persons:

Satu Sikanen *Regional Mayor* **Regional Council of South Karelia**	Pekka Hokkanen *Acting Regional Mayor* **Regional Council of Central Finland**
Päivi Pietarinen *Environmental Director* **City of Jyväskylä**	Bo Svensson *Chairman of the City Council* **City of Östersund**
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REGIONAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH KARELIA	KESKI-SUOMEN LIITTO REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CENTRAL FINLAND
JYVÄSKYLÄ	ÖSTERSUNDS KOMMUN
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