



Arlene McCarthy MEP

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BNP watch

The Mirror's Kevin Maguire had an amusing but serious Point of Disorder this week:

"Carpertbagger Nick Griffin needs an A-Z to find his way round Barking. The BNP chancer lives in Wales, is, alas, MEP for North West England and works in Brussels. He's tried to be elected as an MP in Croydon, West Brom, Oldham and, last time round, Keighley in West Yorkshire. So the fascist must need Botox to keep a straight face when posing as a champion of "local" people in East London. Griffin's got more maps than Google Street View."

Griffins contribution to the Copenhagen climate change talks has been to liken Al Gore to a mass murderer and to publish a paper denying climate change even exists which quotes Goebbels:

"But as Dr Goebbels once observed, if you repeat something often enough, even the most sceptical will believe it."

EU Crackdown on Rogue Ringtones

Arlene's call for an Europe-wide crackdown on rogue ringtone websites has led to action on companies which have been breaking the law and ripping off consumers.

Arlene said: "Many young people will be getting mobile phones in their Christmas stocking so this EU wide crackdown is both timely and welcome. Young people and children are being conned by these websites into downloading ringtones they believe are free, but then they find a nasty surprise in their phone bill. These types of practices are not just unfair; they are banned by law in the EU, in particular when they are targeted at vulnerable people such as children."

"It is shocking that the investigation into the ringtone market revealed that over half the companies (54%) were breaking the law. Europe is leading a crackdown on these rogue websites and is getting results. 70% of the websites with identified problems have been dealt with - 52% corrected their material and 17% were closed down. This sends a strong message to the mobile ringtone industry - we are determined to protect consumers; break the law and you will face the consequences."

Some of the rogue practices include:

- unclear price information
- misleading terms and conditions
- luring consumers into entering a contract without realising it

Arlene added: "Consumers should be on their guard when downloading mobile ringtones. Always check there's no catches hidden in the small print and beware of texting a premium rate number or giving out payment details."



Copenhagen: Arlene backs the Socialist & Democratic Group's campaign to reduce emissions, create green jobs and fund developing countries.

Best wishes for Christmas & the New Year

Tackling Bankers Bonuses

Arlene has been appointed to write the new law on bankers bonuses. Arlene said: "Gordon Brown has led the World in the global response to the financial crisis. One year ago we faced depression and collapse, now thanks to our coordinated European and International response we see signs of recovery around the world. We must continue to build on this cooperation to support the recovery and strengthen our economies and financial system for the future."

"I want the new law to force banks to hold more capital to prevent future crises and ensure the taxpayer never again has to pick up the bill for reckless and irresponsible behaviour by the banking industry. After governments have bailed out the banks with 2 trillion euros of taxpayers' money across Europe (850 billion pounds in the UK) the public is right to be angry that these out of touch bankers are planning to pay themselves bumper bonuses. The UK banks bonus pot alone is 6 billion. I intend to make sure that the new law reins in bankers pay and remuneration. There should be no reward for failure and its time we had robust and fair rules for the banking sector."

Action to find and fund alternatives to animal testing

Arlene is calling for European action to find more alternatives to experiments on animals. Animal Welfare Campaigner Arlene said: "Increased funding, better coordination and acceleration of administrative procedures could help even more, and I want the Commission to look at ways we can go further, faster."

Arlene has added her name to a Written Declaration in the European Parliament. This calls for increased funding for the replacement of research using animals, and asks the European Commission to look into various options for increasing the funds available for this work.

Arlene added "One option to fund this would be the introduction of a "research levy" of 1% of the selling price of products that contain ingredients tested on animals. This would mean that a product normally costing £5.00 would be just 5p more."

Arlene's Campaigns

This month Arlene has added her support to the follow European Parliament Written Declarations:

On the transportation of horses for slaughter in the EU: Every year approximately 100 000 horses are transported unnecessarily long distances under inhumane conditions into and across the European Union for slaughter. There is strong evidence to suggest European law on the protection of animals during transport and related operations has not been robustly enforced. This declaration calls for proper enforcement of that law across the European Union.

On the UNITAID HIV patent pool: Only 1/3 of the 10 million people in need of antiretroviral treatment have access to it and the price of medicines is on the rise, with increasing numbers of AIDS patients failing on their first-line therapy. There is an urgent need to find affordable second-line treatments. Two million children are living with HIV but less than 10% of them have access to the medicines they need, and many antiretroviral (ARV) drugs available are not approved for paediatric use. This declaration calls on the pharmaceutical companies to help accelerate the availability of new treatments for millions of people living with HIV/AIDS, by pooling their patents on a list of key HIV medicines

Copenhagen Climate Change Deal: More work needed

The Prime Minister has pledged to lead an international campaign to turn the agreements established at the Copenhagen summit on climate change into a legally binding treaty. Following the end of talks on Friday Gordon Brown said that nations had made progress and taken a "vital first step" but that more work was needed. The international community had set a target to limit rises in global temperatures by 2050 to two degrees centigrade and for every nation to publish emissions plans to be held up for scrutiny by their peers. Copenhagen will only be a first step. The EU should continue to put pressure on the rest of the world to reach a more ambitious agreement at a later stage.

Working hard for **YOU** in Europe