



Ursula von der Leyen
President-elect of the European Commission

RE: Call to President-elect Von der Leyen to support women's reproductive rights in the EU

Brussels, 1 October 2019

Dear Madam President-elect Von der Leyen,

In light of this year's International Safe Abortion Day we, Members of the European Parliament and Member of Parliament of the Netherlands, call upon you to secure the rights of the 15 million women in the European Union who still lack access to safe and legal abortion.

The EU is founded upon the shared values of human dignity, freedom, equality, and respect for human rights as stated in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union. We pride ourselves in being a union of values. This notion, however, does not hold up when it comes to the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women across our Union. Recent years have witnessed an upsurge in efforts of governments and anti-choice movements to obstruct a woman's right to choose. In some Member States, abortion can even lead to a woman's imprisonment.

The new European Commission's mandate for the next five years presents you with an outstanding opportunity to strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights across the EU. Together we must stand in solidarity with women in each of our Member States and reiterate our strong commitment to a woman's right to decide over her own body.

Exactly 40 years ago, Simone Veil was elected as the European Parliament's first female President. She dedicated her career to the defence and advancement of women's rights and, in doing so, became a role model to us all. We hope that, to honour her legacy, you - as the first female President of the European Commission - will make a woman's right to choose a priority in your agenda for the next five years.

Yours sincerely,

Vera Tax (S&D, NL)
Lilianne Ploumen (Member of Parliament of the Netherlands - Founder and Co-Chair of SheDecides)
MEPs for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Corinne Ellemeet (Member of Parliament of the Netherlands)

Kati Piri (S&D, NL)
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