

Association of South Swedish Regions /

Regionsamverkan Sydsverige

2020-09-08



to the European Commission

Dear Mr Timmermans,

We six regions in southern Sweden; Blekinge, Halland, Jönköping, Kalmar, Kronoberg and Skåne cooperate politically across regional borders in several policy areas. We do this, among other things, in the public transport area for a holistic approach to societal development.

Public transport is a prerequisite for achieving several important societal goals such as regional growth and sustainable development. Public transport is a pioneer in the transition to fossil fuel-free transport and is therefore a good environmental choice. Let us continue with this important work. A large part of public transport in the southern Swedish regions uses biodiesel, e.g. HVO and RME, to eliminate carbon dioxide emissions. Through our work with the conversion of public transport's fuel use, we have come a long way in realizing the EU's ambition for a fossil fuel independent transport sector. Several regions have today completely phased out fossil fuels from public transport. We are determined to go beyond Sweden's and the EU's climate goals and public transport is a key to succeeding in this.

The European Commission is currently reviewing the State Aid Guidelines. If the Commission decides to extend the existing State aid guidelines, the current exemptions for clean biofuels must also be extended. If the tax exemption is not extended, pure biofuels risk becoming so expensive that the market for these disappears. The effect will be a sharp price increase on travel by bus or, in the worst case, sharp increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Add to this the major investments made in biorefineries for renewable fuels and efficient circular food systems. These investments show the way into a low-carbon future but they now face the risk of being wasted. We therefore appeal to the Commission to maintain the current tax exemption until the guidelines on State aid for environmental protection and energy have been revised.

Best regards,

for the Association of South Swedish Regions

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