

Marina Yannakoudakis



Conservative MEP for London



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CUT EU RED TAPE!



■ Conservative MEPs are supporting Prime Minister David Cameron's calls for the European Union to cut red tape for business. 100 companies have joined the PM's campaign to review 1,500 burdensome regulations. Conservative MEPs are also backing David Cameron's plans for a "one-in-one-out" policy for EU rules.

TORY MEPS DELIVER

This month Conservative MEPs have:

- Blocked Labour's plans to regulate e-cigarettes as medicines.
- Introduced stronger language checks for medical professionals and new rules which mean if a doctor is struck off in one country he/she will be struck off across the EU.
- Voted to move towards a single seat for the European Parliament, putting an end to the "Strasbourg Circus" once and for all.
- Blocked EU plans to introduce compulsory sex education for children as young as four.
- Nominated Malala Yousafzai for the Sakharov human rights prize.

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SEX ED PLANS BLOCKED



Marina and fellow Conservative MEPs headed off proposals on "sexual and reproductive health and rights" which would see sex education become compulsory across Europe for children as young as four. Plans by Portuguese MEP and Labour ally Edite Estrela would enforce rules across the whole European Union relating to controversial issues such as abortion and contraception, with a proposal "to make sex education classes compulsory for all primary and secondary school children". Estrela is the MEP who introduced plans for compulsory paid maternity leave which were also blocked by Marina. As the proposals were about to be voted upon in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Conservative MEPs were the first to intervene to have the whole package referred back to the Gender Equality Committee with other parties backing the Conservative stance. Marina said: "While there were many good suggestions in the report to do with women's rights and equal treatment of gay, lesbian and trans-gender people, the EU should not be in the business of approving a set of rules making sex education compulsory for infants as soon as they leave nursery. That is a matter for member states – and most importantly for parents – to decide."

E-CIGS SUCCESS



■ Meeting e-cig users in Brussels

■ Conservative MEPs blocked Labour plans to over-regulate electronic cigarettes as part of the EU's revised Tobacco Directive. "E-cigs" are battery-operated devices that deliver nicotine via inhaled vapour. In a speech in Strasbourg, Marina said: "As an ex-smoker I know all too well that it is hard to give up the habit. While people continue to smoke we must support those who want to quit. By over-regulating products such as e-cigarettes we would make it more difficult for people to quit." A Conservative amendment which will better control electronic cigarettes in the same way cigarettes are controlled (with health warnings and restricting sales to minors) but would stop short of regulating e-cigarettes as medicines was passed by the European Parliament.

GAY RIGHTS PUSH



■ The British colonial law criminalising homosexuality in Cyprus is still enforced in the north part of the island. Two years after Turkish Cypriot leader promised Marina to repeal the ban, your London MEP has returned to Cyprus to revive the process. Turkish Cypriot political leaders including Dr. Derviş Eroğlu pledged to Marina to repeal the gay ban before Christmas, ending the decades-old rule which makes the north part of Cyprus the only place in Europe where it is still illegal to be gay. Marina said on her visit: "The Turkish Cypriot LGBT community has waited long enough for decriminalisation. A single set of measures to decriminalise homosexuality must be tabled without delay."

HEALTH BATTLES



■ Marina has been negotiating a number of health dossiers in Brussels including EU rules on medical devices, in vitro devices and patient safety. She worked with other MEPs to vote down Socialist proposals which may have slowed down innovation in the medical devices sector. Conservative MEPs also blocked plans contained in the in vitro devices legislation which would have meant that HIV home-testing kits, which have helped in the diagnosis and prevention of the disease, would only have been issued on prescription. Marina also led the charge against parts of the patient safety dossier which would have allowed Brussels to interfere in the NHS. See Marina's article here: <http://bit.ly/1iojPAU>

PARTY CONFERENCE



It was a busy Party Conference in Manchester for Marina who attended a number of events where she was able to meet and report back to her London constituents. She also addressed a fringe meeting organised by the RSPCA where she spoke about her work on animal welfare as well as a fringe event entitled "Does the EU benefit our health?" where she focused on her role as the lead Conservative on public health issues in the European Parliament. Marina said: "It was a great conference. All our members are behind the message that we need to support hardworking families. And Conservative activists are prepared for fight at next year's European and London borough elections."

OECD FORUM



■ Marina was invited to speak at the OECD's Women's Forum in Deauville, France where she took part in the panel on "Women of Influence". She spoke about EU plans for quotas for women on boards and the need to support women in their careers.