**Priority question for written answer P-003944/2025/rev.1**
**to the Commission**
Rule 144
**Charlie Weimers (ECR)**

Subject: Commission position on tobacco and nicotine: concerning lack of scientific evidence

In a recent statement, the Health Commissioner Várhelyi has equated the health risks of new tobacco and nicotine products, including nicotine pouches, with those of traditional tobacco products. Last week, the Commissioner's statements went even further, writing on X that 'nicotine contributes to cancer development'[1]. This implies a significant assertion and raises serious concerns regarding the scientific basis of such a position.

The Commission's response to requests for clarification revealed a concerning lack of scientific evidence supporting its position, if any at all. Therefore:

1. How does the Commission justify presenting such an official position while the evaluation of the Tobacco Products Directive[2] (TPD) is still ongoing and is this early assessment in line with the requirements outlined within the better regulation agenda?

2. Will the Commission ensure that the evaluation process of the TPD includes comprehensive studies that clarify the variation in health impacts between different nicotine products and smoking, as explicitly requested by Parliament in both the BECA Resolution[3] and the Non-Communicable Diseases Resolution[4]?

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[1] https://x.com/OliverVarhelyi/status/1973053500079681993.

[2] Directive 2014/40/EU of 3 April 2014 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products (OJ L 127, 29.4.2014, pp. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/40/oj (http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/40/oj)).

[3] European Parliament resolution of 16 February 2022 on strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer (texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0038) – towards a comprehensive and coordinated strategy (2020/2267(INI)) – calls on the Commission to follow up on the scientific evaluations of the health risks related to electronic cigarettes, heated tobacco products and novel tobacco products, including the assessment of the risks of using these products compared to consuming other tobacco products.

[4] European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2023 on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (2023/2075(INI)) – calls on the Commission and the Member States to: follow up on the scientific research and evaluations by public health authorities on the health risks related to electronic cigarettes, heated tobacco products and novel tobacco products, including the assessment of the risks of using these products compared to consuming other tobacco products.