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New rights for bus and coach passengers welcomed

An EFA press release by Ian Hudghton MEP -Scottish National Party

SNP MEP and Party President Ian Hudghton has welcomed today's vote in the European Parliament to improve the rights of bus and coach passengers.

The SNP MEP said that the new EU law would be particularly important for improving services for disabled users of bus and coach services.

The new law, which comes into force in 2013, will provide for compensation for delayed or cancelled long-distance coach services.

It will also, regardless of distance, enshrine the principle of non-discriminatory access to transport and provide for compensation if wheelchairs or other mobility equipment are lost or damaged. In addition, relevant staff will need to be offered training on giving assistance to passengers of reduced mobility.

After voting in favour of the new law in Strasbourg, Mr Hudghton said:

"This new law is an important step forward in improving the rights of bus and coach passengers, particularly those with reduced mobility.

"I've been contacted by many organisations and individuals in Scotland who've been extremely supportive of the new requirements.

"This new law significantly improves passenger rights without being unduly onerous on bus and coach operators. I'm particularly pleased with the guarantees we've secured for disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility. As a result of this law, disabled passengers will have the right to be accompanied free of charge by a person of their choice if a coach company is unable to provide special assistance in good time.

"All in all, this is a good result for bus and coach users, and for disabled travellers in particular."

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