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**MEP Urges Shorter Route to Obtain Apple Decision**

A less costly and quicker way to establish whether state aid regulations have been breached in the Apple issue would be to seek clarification from the European Court of Justice rather than instigating a challenge.

This was proposed by Independent MEP Marian Harkin when she stressed that it was possible to avoid a lengthy and expensive procedure by utilising a mechanism which had been regularly used by member states when they have been unsure as to whether certain matters complied with EU legislation.

She said:- “This would clarify whether the European Commission’s ruling complies with EU legislation and, if so, what are the implications for future tax policy in the member states”.

“Those of us who have seen the pressure put on Ireland by certain EU members during the bailout to change our corporation tax regime, and who see the ongoing pressure to adopt an EU wide common consolidated corporate tax base, are only too well aware of the need to be scrupulously careful in any matter to do with tax from an EU perspective.

“What I don't want is that 2/3 years down the line we find competition policy being used to influence or indeed direct our tax policies. This issue is too important for hasty decisions. The ECJ is there to adjudicate in an impartial way on matters such as this. Not to use it would be careless at best and dangerous at worst”, Marian Harkin MEP concluded.

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