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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Data economy initiatives: A missed opportunity to foster the data-driven economy

Brussels, 10 January 2017 – The data-driven economy brings tremendous benefits to our societies and is critical to every sector of the industry. With data, a farmer can grow crops more sustainably; a hospital can deliver improved care for patients; and businesses can continuously improve their products to the benefit of consumers. Public policy needs to promote investment and innovation in these new services.

With the publication of new Data Economy initiatives today, the European Commission recognised the importance of the free flow of data. The American Chamber of Commerce to the EU (AmCham EU) regrets, however, the unfortunate lack of ambition of the proposal. Karl Cox, Chairman of the Board, AmCham EU, stated: ‘The Commission missed an opportunity to take action against unjustified data localisation rules. They raise the costs of cross-border services, while failing to improve the protection of citizens’ data’. He went on to say: ‘AmCham EU urges the Commission to swiftly present a strong initiative to lift and ban such barriers’.

The Commission also recognises the prospects and benefits brought by machine-generated data and identifies a series of questions around access, transfer, portability and liability. While AmCham EU recognises the need for more understanding of such issues, we fear that premature and overly prescriptive intervention will stifle innovation in this emerging economy.

The European Commission also presented today a communication on international data transfers and a proposed new regulation on e-privacy. The data economy cannot thrive if it stops at EU borders. Therefore, AmCham EU encourages the Commission to improve the efficiency of international data transfer solutions. On e-privacy, AmCham EU is concerned about the proposal. The approach to extend historic telephony rules to new services does not reflect today’s market realities.

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About AmCham EU

AmCham EU speaks for American companies committed to Europe on trade, investment and competitiveness issues. It aims to ensure a growth-orientated business and investment climate in Europe. AmCham EU facilitates the resolution of transatlantic issues that impact business and plays a role in creating better understanding of EU and US positions on business matters.

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