

Press release

Carol Monaghan MP and Photonics Leadership Group 19/01/2017

For immediate release

Westminster Hall debate regarding Photonics Industry, Wednesday 25/1, 11am

Carol Monaghan, MP for Glasgow North West, has successfully applied for a Westminster Hall debate on the UK Photonics Industry, to be held on Wednesday.

The Photonics Industry is a growth sector in the UK with more than 1,500 companies who employ over 70,000 people with an output of £10.5bn. The industry has experienced a sustained growth of 6-8% per year over the last 3 decades.

More importantly the Photonics Industry enables other industries to be competitive with 10% of overall UK jobs depending on it.

Parliamentary support for the Photonics Industry with a new APPG for Photonics

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Photonics' inaugural meeting was held in October, instigated by Carol Monaghan MP. The group has cross-party support from MPs throughout the UK. It is now fully registered and included on the parliamentary list of approved APPGs:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmallparty/161124/phototonics.htm>

Carol is an active campaigner for science and technology and is a member of the House of Commons' Science and Technology Select Committee. As a former physics teacher Carol brings first-hand experience of science to Westminster and is the SNP group spokesperson on Education.

The Photonics Leadership Group, a not-for-profit organisation representing the UK Photonics industry, will provide administrative support for the APPG and will assist the elected officers in managing the group. In addition, the Photonics Leadership Group has set up and will manage the new website: www.photonicsUK.org/appgphotonics

The APPG on Photonics will hold its next meeting on 21 February 2017 in the Houses of Parliament, with Members of both Houses and from all parties invited to attend. A number of leading Photonics companies will be there to provide hands-on demonstrations of products to raise awareness of the industry.

Carol Monaghan MP commented:

“Building on the international year of light in 2015, I am delighted to have secured a debate in Westminster Hall for the Photonics Industry, recognising the huge contribution that the light-based technology - photonics - makes to the UK economy. A key enabling technology, encompassing everything from lasers and cameras to lighting and touch screen displays, photonics is critical to increasing manufacturing productivity, delivering efficient healthcare and keeping us digitally connected and secure. The UK has long been a hot bed of photonics innovation and many companies, including those in my own constituency, are translating world-leading UK science into globally exported products. I want Parliamentarians to better

understand where this hidden UK strength is having impact, and how photonics can help our industrial output and economy to grow.”

Speaking after the confirmation of the APPG registration, Dr John Lincoln of the Photonics Leadership Group said:

“Photonics is one of the key technologies of the 21st century, touching every aspect of our lives. Where we need to see, make or change something at a distance; from laser welding of cars to make them safer, lighter and more efficient; to the essential fibre optic network delivering data to us all; or the touch screen on our mobile electronics; photonics is everywhere.

“The UK is a leading manufacturer of photonics with an annual output of over £10bn, over 75% of which is exported, demonstrating the UK’s globally-leading capability. Even when something is manufactured abroad it is often touched by a UK-made laser in the process. We now need to accelerate adoption of light technology by UK manufacturing to boost our domestic productivity.

“The Photonics Leadership Group is delighted to welcome the APPG on Photonics to share our passion and ensure the UK makes best use of our photonics strength.”

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More information

Photonics APPG: www.photonicsUK.org/appgphotonics

Westminster Hall Debates: <http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/business/westminster-hall-debates/>

The Photonics Leadership Group: <https://photonicsuk.org/>

BBC News Business: [The many ways lasers help us see the world more clearly](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-38130375)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-38130375>

Contact APPG Photonics Secretariat

Email: carol.monaghan.mp@parliament.uk

Phone: 0141 3372211

Carol Monaghan MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Carol Monaghan MP
Constituency Office Glasgow North West
500 Dumbarton Road
Glasgow G11 6SL