

MUSC

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

GENERAL PEDIATRICS
326 CALHOUN STREET
2 CENTER • ROOMS 200-205
PO BOX 250106
CHARLESTON • SC 29425

(843) 953-8512
FAX (843) 953-8709

J. Rautt Reigart, MD
Director

William T. Basco, MD
Paul M. Oarden, MD
Walton L. Ector, MD
Kelly Havig-Lipka, MD
Melissa Howard Henshaw, MD
Michelle Lally, MD
Colleen Moran, MD
James R. Roberts, MD
Sara E. Schuh, MD

Patient Appointments
General Pediatrics Clinic
(843) 953-8444
Primary Care Clinic
(843) 953-8499

March 28, 2001

The Honorable Christine Todd Whitman
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Whitman:

The Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee is pleased with your commitment to promoting the health, growth, and development of children by ensuring for them an environment safe from environmental hazards. We are glad that you understand the need to specifically consider the risks to children that may result from exposures to hazards that are regulated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

One important contributor to ensuring developmental health has been the Federal Interagency Task Force on Children's Environmental Health and Safety, chaired by the Administrator and the Secretary of The Department of Health and Human Services. We understand that this Task Force will continue under your leadership, jointly with Secretary Thomas. We are delighted that this joint leadership will continue. This partnership among federal agencies concerning developmental health is critical to the issue we want to draw to your attention.

As the Agency over the last several years has adopted a progressively stronger role in the public health arena, it has increasingly needed more public health expertise. This is equally true with regard to internal staff and to membership on various advisory committees. For example, the Agency in its research strategic plan has acknowledged its lack of ability to conduct or properly evaluate population-based human studies. From our perspective this deficit is especially evident in the areas of human reproductive and developmental health. We believe that the following three steps would markedly enhance the abilities of the agency in this area:

1. Recruitment of professional agency staff trained in human reproductive and developmental health.
2. Recruitment of professional agency staff with specific expertise in pediatric epidemiology. At least some of these staff should be pediatricians to improve the overall pediatric expertise of the agency.
3. Continued and increased collaboration with other agencies charged with public health responsibilities. This should include specifically agencies with pediatric public health responsibilities.

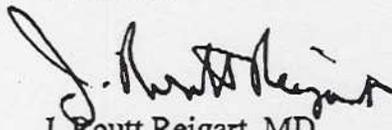
Page Two
March 28, 2001

In summary, it seems critical to the public health role of the agency to improve staff expertise generally in public health and specifically to improve the capacity to pursue public health goals as they relate to children. This enhanced expertise could do much to improve the Agency interaction with other agencies as well as enhancing in-house research and decision making.

We specifically call these opportunities to your attention because we believe that these actions would increase the effectiveness of your efforts to promote the health of infants and children by meaningful actions of the Agency.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the health of our children.

Sincerely,



J. Routh Reigart, MD
Chair, Children's Health Protection
Advisory Committee

JRR/pc