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VIREL N. GOGGE, JR., WHENA

Congress of the United States

Mouse of Representatives Committee on Appropriations Washington, DC 20515—6015

February 21, 2002

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Honorable Christine Todd Whitman Administrator Environmental Protection Agency Ariel Rios Federal Building 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Administrator Whitman:

I understand that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is preparing to submit the draft Reassessment of Dioxin for interagency review. As you know, the Dioxin Reassessment will be one of the most influential toxicity assessments coming our of the Agency in recent years, affecting government and private cleanup efforts and many regulatory issues, and even raising policy questions regarding the U.S. food supply.

Despite its enormous policy implications, substantial questions regarding the scientific underpitning of the Reassessment's conclusions about the toxicity of doxin and "dioxin-like" compounds have been raised by other federal agencies, outside scientists, and EPA's Science Advisory Board. In addition, it appears the draft Reassessment may not be consistent with other authoritative international assessments of dioxin, and positions taken by other U.S. federal agencies. In keeping with your laudable afforts to assure that the Agency's products reflect the best available scientific an alysis, I believe the Agency should seek a further, independent, expedited scientific review of this document.

To provide this independent review, I request that EPA undertake an agreement with the National Academy of Sciences to review the current draft Dioxin Reassessment. The review should address the toxicological questions associated with dioxin, including: the scientific evidence for the appropriate classification of dioxin as to its potential human carcinogenicity; the validity of the non-threshold linear dose-response model in light of epidemiological studies and the corresponding cancer slope factor calculated by the Agency through use of this model; the scientific evidence supporting the calculation

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and use of Toxicity Equivalent Factors; and the appropriateness of including "diottin-like" chemicals in the risk assessment without individual empirical review of their effects. The NAS should, among other issues, review the comments on the druft Reassessment registered by the Science Advisory Board review panel.

I know that review by the NAS might delay the final publication of the Reassessment. However, I believe the NAS review is likely to expedite the subsequent interagency review that would be occurring in any event, with the added benefit of bringing to bear the expertise of respected non-governmental scientists in this area. The result will be to increase the scientific credibility of -- and public confidence in -- he final Reassessment and the substantial regulatory implications flowing from that document.

I want to express my appreciation for the way in which the Agency has cooperated with this Subscimmittee, and I look forward to your assistance in this matter.

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Subcommittee on VA, HUD

And Independent Agencies Appropriations