



CHAPTER 280
BEN FRANKLIN
STATION BOX 7672
WASHINGTON, DC 20044
202-566-2785(V)
202-566-1460(F)
Website www.nteu280.org

November 22, 2004

Hon. Michael Leavitt, Administrator
and
Hon. Stephen L. Johnson, Deputy Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Messrs. Leavitt and Johnson:

We are writing to endorse the accompanying letter to you from Dr. Brian Dementi, Senior Toxicologist in the Office of Pesticide Programs.

We agree with and share Dr. Dementi's concern over the public health implications of the Agency accepting the findings of the Pathology Working Group (PWG) referenced in Dr. Dementi's letter. We are also concerned over the damage to EPA's reputation for scientific integrity that flows from this acceptance.

We refrain from reiterating Dr. Dementi's detailed critique of the PWG, but are constrained to point out, as he did not, that at least one scientist held in high esteem by his colleagues, Dr. Herbert Needleman, has characterized the PWG as "not science, not even science fiction," in his dissent from the Science Advisory Panel's report on the carcinogenicity of malathion. The California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Defense Council have similarly found fault with the result of the Agency's acceptance of that PWG, namely the classification of malathion's carcinogenicity as "Suggestive Evidence of Carcinogenicity." The impact that flows from this lower classification, namely that no quantitative assessment of cancer risk will be done, with the concomitant implications for higher cancer risks to the public being allowed by EPA, should be of concern to you.

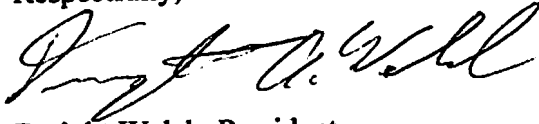
We do not dispute, within the confines of controlling laws, regulations, and guidance, management's right to make the ultimate calls in terms of how much risk the Agency will allow the public to endure. But we do dispute management's acceptance of the scientifically flawed and ethically questionable PWG conclusions on which management's standard setting is to be based.

We, along with Dr. Dementi, appreciate the openness with which management has facilitated Dr. Dementi's several dissents concerning malathion to be documented

and made available to the public on Agency websites.

But as a matter of scientific integrity, we believe that Dr. Dementi's recommendations for a re-read of the disputed histopathology slides by a panel of pathologists not in the employ of the registrant, perhaps to include Dr. Robert Maronpot of the National Toxicology Program, is warranted. It would be a simple matter to arrange this, and would ensure that the best, supportable science will form the basis for management's final actions on this important pesticide.

Respectfully,



Dwight Welch, President
(B.S. Entomology)



Dr. Arthur Chiu, Vice-President
(M.D., Ph.D., Pathology)



Dr. William Hirzy, Vice-President
(Ph.D. Chemistry)