Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

August 2, 2007

The Honorable Andrew C. von Eschenbach, M.D.
Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Commissioner von Eschenbach:

As you know, both the Senate and the House have recently passed legislation—by overwhelming margins—that would reauthorize the prescription drug and medical device user fee programs, the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act, and the Pediatric Research Equity Act. This legislation also incorporates provisions that would make critical improvements in the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) authorities and resources for oversight of post-market drug safety, establish for the first time a mandatory clinical trials registry and results database, and improve FDA's food safety oversight.

Since passage of the House legislation on July 11, 2007, staff from the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce has engaged in extensive bipartisan negotiations to craft a conference agreement. These negotiations have been highly productive and a great deal of progress and consensus has been attained. We wanted you to know that we will continue our work during August to finalize a conference report that Congress can act on early next month.

The American public deserves a strong and effective FDA, which only its highly qualified employees can provide. You and each of the dedicated employees of the FDA should have every confidence that Congress will reauthorize these important public health programs in early September.

Sincerely,

Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader

Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House

Edward M. Kennedy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor, and Pensions

John D. Dingell
Chairman
House Committee on
Energy and Commerce