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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

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July 15, 2005

Via Facsimile: (301) 827-1960

Original via USPS Mail

Lester M. Crawford, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Crawford:

I recently received an allegation that the amount of cash bonuses awarded to career senior executive service (SES) employees at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has increased significantly during your tenure as Acting Commissioner. Based upon the documents received, it appears that bonuses were increased from about \$160,000 in 2004 under Dr. Mark McClellan's leadership at the FDA to over \$500,000 in 2005 under your leadership. I would like to inquire about this issue.

The purpose of employment bonuses is to recognize and encourage good job performance. Under civil service law, federal agencies can reward their employees with cash awards or additional time off. It is interesting to note, however, that according to a 2002 Office of Personnel Management (OPM) survey, less than half of the federal workers surveyed believed awards were given based on how well employees did their job and less than a third believed that their award program gives them an incentive to do their best.

In addition, last year, the Washington Post conducted a review of fiscal year (FY) 2002 personnel data obtained from the OPM and reported that the typical bonus award for SES federal employees was \$10,000, or about 7.2 percent of their salary, compared to \$865, or about 1.7 percent, for other federal employees.

These findings raise questions about the awarding of bonuses. Accordingly, as Chairman of the Committee on Finance (Committee), I request a response to the following questions related to FDA's employee bonuses:

1. How many career SES employees and General Schedule (GS) employees at the GS-14 and GS-15 levels received bonuses from FY 2000 through FY 2004 and, to the extent possible, for the current fiscal year through July 15, 2005? Please provide the total bonus amount for each fiscal year by pay category or

grade. In addition, please provide a breakdown by individual employee, including the individual's grade and job title.

2. What is the total amount of cash awards paid to career SES, GS-14 and GS-15 employees each year from FY 2000 through FY 2004 and, to the extent possible, for the current fiscal year through July 15, 2005? Please provide the total amounts for each fiscal year by pay category or grade. In addition, please provide a breakdown by individual employee, including the individual's grade and job title.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. I would appreciate a response to my inquiries no later than July 27, 2005. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Emilia DiSanto or Angela Choy at (202) 224-4515. All correspondence should be sent electronically in PDF searchable format to thomas_novelli@finance-rep.senate.gov. All original material should be sent via USPS mail.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman