

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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October 24, 2007

Dr. John H. Marburger III, Director
Office of Science and Technology Policy
725 17th Street, NW, Room 5228
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Dr. Marburger:

In March of 2006, after several allegations of interference by the Administration with conclusions and statements made by federal scientists in their reports—particularly as they related to climate change—you met with the principal science officials from all of the federal agencies and departments. You urged them to adopt media contact policies similar to those issued by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). NASA's policy encourages "the free exchange of ideas, data and information as part of scientific and technical inquiry. Scientific and technical information from or about Agency programs and projects will be accurate and unfiltered." (emphasis added)¹

In August of 2007, you, in concert with the Office of Management and Budget, issued a memorandum regarding the FY 2009 research and development budget that said "[a]gencies are expected to conduct programs in accordance with the highest standards of ethical and scientific integrity."² That same month you were quoted in *USA Today* as saying that you had "not seen any orchestration or central direction" from the Administration about what scientists can and cannot say, and that President Bush expected scientists to share their expertise and to "be a little bit proactive in getting the truth out" if they encountered any resistance.³

We expect our government researchers and scientists to provide to both Congress and the public the full results of their taxpayer-supported work without the filter that those of opposing views might like to impose. Otherwise, we cannot have a full and free scientific debate. Therefore, we were very disappointed after all these commitments you have made publicly to scientific integrity, to read today that your office had played a role in removing sections of the testimony prepared for Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to present at a Senate hearing on "Examining the Human Health Impacts of Global Warming,"⁴ concerning the impact of climate change on public health and potential health risks.

¹ NASA Policy on the Release of Information to News and Information Media," pp. 1-2

² Memorandum entitled "FY 2009 Administration Research and Development Budget Priorities" from John H. Marburger and Stephen S. McMillin, Aug. 14, 2007.

³ "Science vs. Politics Gets Down and Dirty," *USA Today*, Aug. 6, 2007.

⁴ Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Oct. 23, 2007.

According to Dana Perino, the White House press secretary, the Office of Science and Technology Policy did not believe the science in the testimony matched the science that was in a report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).⁵

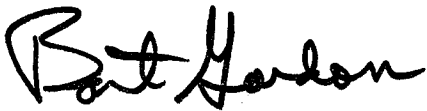
We are particularly interested in your reliance on the work of the IPCC, which you have questioned on a number of occasions⁶. However, it appears that the IPCC did support CDC's conclusions. In the "Summary for Policymakers" of Working Group II, it states that with less than 1 degree Celsius increase in global temperature, there will be an "increasing burden from malnutrition, diarrhoeal, cardio-respiratory, and infectious diseases, increased morbidity and mortality from heat waves, floods, and droughts and changed distribution of some disease vectors."⁷ This appears to support the deleted sections of Dr. Gerberding's testimony.

Therefore, by this letter, we request that you provide to the Committee all records, as defined in the Attachment, relating to the testimony of Dr. Gerberding before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on Oct. 23, 2007. This should include all drafts of Dr. Gerberding's proposed testimony and records of changes that were made. These documents should be delivered to Room B-374 of the Rayburn House Office Building by 5 p.m. on Monday, October 29, 2007.

If your staff has any questions or needs additional information, please contact Dan Pearson, Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee staff director, at (202) 225-4494, or Edith Holleman, Investigations & Oversight counsel, at (202) 225-8459.

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



BART GORDON
Chairman



BRAD MILLER
Chairman
Subcommittee on Investigations
& Oversight

Cc:

Rep. Ralph Hall
Ranking Member

Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Investigations & Oversight

⁵ "White House Edited CDC Climate Testimony," *AP*, Oct. 24, 2007.

⁶ "Bush Aide Rejects Climate Goal," *Washington Post*, Oct. 19, 2007.

⁷ "Key Impacts as a Function of Increasing global Average Temperature Change," Summary for Policymakers, Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC, p. 16.

ATTACHMENT

1. The term "records" is to be construed in the broadest sense and shall mean any written or graphic material, however produced or reproduced, of any kind or description, consisting of the original and any non-identical copy (whether different from the original because of notes made on or attached to such copy or otherwise) and drafts and both sides thereof, whether printed or recorded electronically or magnetically or stored in any type of data bank, including, but not limited to, the following: correspondence, memoranda, records, summaries of personal conversations or interviews, minutes or records of meetings or conferences, opinions or reports of consultants, projections, statistical statements, drafts, contracts, agreements, purchase orders, invoices, confirmations, telegraphs, telexes, agendas, books, notes, pamphlets, periodicals, reports, studies, evaluations, opinions, logs, diaries, desk calendars, appointment books, tape recordings, video recordings, e-mails, voice mails, computer tapes, or other computer stored matter, magnetic tapes, microfilm, microfiche, punch cards, all other records kept by electronic, photographic, or mechanical means, charts, photographs, notebooks, drawings, plans, inter-office communications, intra-office and intra-departmental communications, transcripts, checks and canceled checks, bank statements, ledgers, books, records or statements of accounts, and papers and things similar to any of the foregoing, however denominated.

2. The terms "relating," "relate," or "regarding" as to any given subject means anything that constitutes, contains, embodies, identifies, deals with, or is in any manner whatsoever pertinent to that subject, including but not limited to records concerning the preparation of other records.