

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 10, 2005

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Specter and Ranking Member Harkin:

We urge you to retain Senate language that ensures the integrity of scientific advice and information in federal agencies in the final FY2006 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.

We thank you for your support of Senate Amendment 2228, which was adopted by the Senate. This amendment prohibits the use of funds to ask candidates for appointment to scientific advisory committees to disclose their voting records, political affiliation, or opinions on unrelated political issues. The amendment also prohibits the use of funds to disseminate scientific information that is deliberately false or misleading.

Federal advisory committees provide policymakers with independent and informed advice on technical issues. When selecting scientific experts for these advisory committees, “[i]t is inappropriate to ask them to provide nonrelevant information, such as voting record, political-party affiliation, or position on particular policies,” according to a 2005 report by the National Academies of Sciences. The Senate language would implement this recommendation. By barring the dissemination of false or misleading information, the Senate language also would take a step toward ensuring the integrity of scientific information provided by federal agencies.

The House version of the bill includes a provision that prohibits the use of funds to appoint individuals to Federal advisory committees on the basis of political affiliation. With both the Senate and House including language to uphold scientific integrity in federal agencies, we believe the final bill should include strong provisions on this important issue.

We urge the inclusion of the Senate language on scientific integrity in the final FY2006 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Dick Durbin

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Ed Kennedy

Norm Feingold

John Specter

Bobas A. Mikulski

Al Harkin

Ken Salazar

Frank Lautenberg

James D. DeLoach

Frank R. Lautenberg

Ron Wyden