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INDEPENDENT

May 18, 2004

PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF SCIENCE

Vote for the Waxman-Tierney Amendment to H.R. 2432

Dear Colleague:

There is growing concern in the scientific community that political interference is undermining science in the regulatory process. I urge you to support the creation of an independent commission to investigate this concern and to protect scientific integrity. **Please vote for the Waxman-Tierney Amendment to H.R. 2432 to establish a commission on the politicization of science.**

In February 2004, twenty Nobel Laureates and many other leading U.S. scientists issued an unprecedented statement of concern about the misuse of science by the Bush Administration. Citing a range of issues, from military intelligence to the Endangered Species Act to childhood lead poisoning, these distinguished scholars wrote:

> When scientific knowledge has been found to be in conflict with its political goals, the administration has often manipulated the process through which science enters into its decisions. This has been done by placing people who are professionally unqualified or who have clear conflicts of interest in official posts and on scientific advisory committees; by disbanding existing advisory committees; by censoring and suppressing reports by the government's own scientists; and by simply not seeking independent scientific advice.

Leading scientific journals have also expressed their opposition to the politicization of science:

- Citing the Administration's suppression of an EPA study revealing problems with the President's environmental initiatives, *Scientific American* editorialized that "it is increasingly impossible to ignore that this White House disdains research that inconveniences it." (4/26/2004)

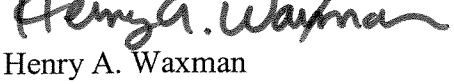
(over)

- *Nature* has concluded that "[o]n major policy issues such as ballistic missile defense, and stem cell research, Bush committed early on to an ideologically driven approach, and has stuck to it. In an age when science pervades so many aspects of government, this is a remarkable, and remarkably ill-judged, approach to setting policy." (Aug. 21, 2003)
- On the politicization of key appointments to scientific committees that advise on policy, *Science* has determined that "[w]hat's unusual about the current epidemic is not that the Bush administration examines candidates for compatibility with its 'values.' It's how deep the practice cuts; in particular, the way it now invades areas once immune to this kind of manipulation." (Jan. 31, 2003)
- Most recently, the *New England Journal of Medicine* has found that the FDA's failure to approve over-the-counter marketing of emergency contraception "suggests that the FDA's decision-making process is being influenced by political considerations," because there is "no medical dispute." (4/8/2004)

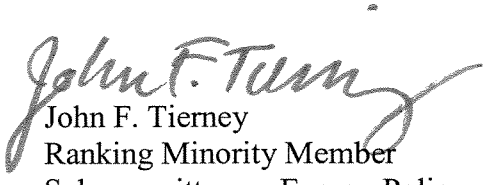
These serious concerns deserve a serious response from Congress. I urge you to vote for the Waxman-Tierney amendment to H.R. 2432 to establish an independent commission on the politicization of science in the regulatory process.

For more information, please contact Josh Sharfstein on the minority staff of the Government Reform Committee at (202) 225-5420.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member



John F. Tierney
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs