

Secretary Hilda L. Solis  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20210

David Michaels, Ph.D., M.P.H.,  
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June 11, 2010

Dear Secretary Solis, Assistant Secretary Michaels, Director Howard, and Director Birnbaum:

We note the current Gulf oil crisis and laud your efforts to protect public health in resolving this crisis. As Directors and doctors of the World Trade Center Centers of Excellence that now care for the health of rescue workers, responders, and community members harmed by the dust and fumes from the destruction of the World Trade Centers, we urge that you recall the lessons and prevent a repetition of costly mistakes made in the aftermath of September 11:

1. Provide the maximum level of protection to workers and residents to prevent or minimize exposure, even in the face of uncertainty of exposures and about the level of toxicity of exposures derived from the released oil and its clean-up;
2. Institute a broad, coordinated, and publicly accessible program to measure and monitor exposures of workers and residents for the purposes of reducing such exposures and of understanding possible health effects;
3. Register clean-up workers and potentially exposed residents and offer medical surveillance including baseline health information and lung function measurements before worker involvement in clean-up; such a registry and surveillance program should be sponsored by organizations other than BP.
4. Enforce applicable laws to the maximum extent possible, leaving as little as possible to the discretion of private industry;

5. Communicate clearly and accurately to all relevant audiences, especially those who may be exposed to toxic materials in the clean-up process.

Failure to recognize the errors made from the response to the WTC disaster and a further failure to benefit from their attendant lessons may well lead to needless risk to human health in the Gulf and will amplify the human and financial costs associated with such risks. That would be a great shame.

Please let us know if we can be of help.

Sincerely,



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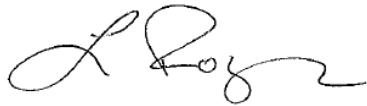
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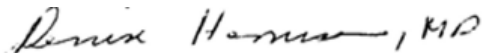
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