

Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee

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December 16, 2002

Honorable Christine Todd Whitman
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

RE: Initiative on Aging

Dear Administrator Whitman,

The Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee is delighted to hear about the Initiative on Aging and strongly supports this endeavor to address environmental health hazards facing the older American.

We believe the success of the Office of Children's Health Protection (OCHP) should provide useful guidance to this new initiative. One of the clearest lessons to date, however, has been that OCHP's focus on one concern – children's health – has been key to its success. We are concerned that expanding the mission of OCHP to cover environmental health concerns of both children and the aging will do justice to neither effort, and thus diminish the effectiveness of both. We believe that OCHP should retain its present name and mission.

OCHP has also succeeded in part because of a significant initial investment of EPA resources. We hope that you will make a similar investment in the aging initiative and consider ultimately establishing this additional initiative as an independent office or effort.

Much work remains to protect children more fully from environmental health hazards. A strong, well-resourced and focused OCHP should continue to play a key role in this work, both within EPA and across our nation. We believe that this key role requires sustained funding and additional resources.

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OCHP cannot continue to play such a role, however, without permanent leadership. The Advisory Committee is deeply concerned that the OCHP is currently without a permanent director and has been for seven months. Consistent with your dedication to children's environmental health, we urge you to promptly fill this position with an energetic, well-qualified staff member.

We look forward to continued strong EPA efforts on behalf of children, and we welcome additional initiatives to protect other susceptible populations, such as the aging. We continue to offer our assistance to the agency in these efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie A. Marty".

Melanie A. Marty, Ph.D.
Chair, Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee

Cc: L. Fisher, Deputy Administrator
L. Combs, Chief Financial Officer
L. Blackburn, Acting Director, Office of children's Health Protection, Office of the
Administrator
J. Rodman, Acting Director, Office of Children's Health Protection, Office of the
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