

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

September 7, 2006

Albert W. Burgstahler, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus of Chemistry
The University of Kansas
1620 Massachusetts Avenue
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Professor Burgstahler and Others:

President Derek Bok asked me to respond to your letter to him of August 22, 2006. First, let me clarify what seems to be a misunderstanding by many people of the purpose of the Harvard review. The review was conducted to determine whether Dr. Chester Douglass had committed research misconduct and not to determine whether there is an association between fluoride in drinking water and osteosarcoma. The latter is a scientific question, which should be answered through scientific inquiry, acquisition and analysis of data, and peer reviewed publication. Harvard as an institution appropriately takes no position on the scientific question.

As you may know, Dr. Elise Bassin's data and analysis were published this year in a peer-reviewed journal, which is edited by a Harvard faculty member. Dr. Douglass and his collaborators at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) have not yet published the results of their analysis, but I understand they expect to do so in early 2007. Dr. Douglass's work, as well as Dr. Bassin's, should and we expect will be subject to rigorous scientific peer review and discourse.

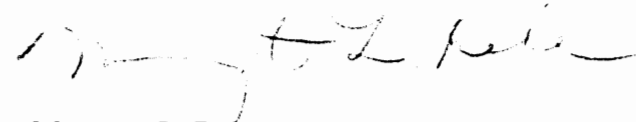
The review at Harvard focused instead on whether Dr. Douglass intentionally misrepresented or suppressed Dr. Bassin's work. In conducting the review, all the materials provided by the Environmental Working Group (EWG), including the "final report" cited by the EWG, were examined. After careful review, two committees concluded that Dr. Douglass had not misrepresented or suppressed Dr. Bassin's data. Indeed, the Office of Research Integrity of the Public Health Service has accepted the conclusions.

The review also looked at the allegation that Dr. Douglass had a personal financial conflict of interest with the Colgate Palmolive Company. The two committees determined that he did not have a conflict of interest under either Harvard or governmental conflict of interest policies.

In conclusion, we recognize that there is great public interest in issues involving the fluoridation of water and that the issue engenders strong opinions on all sides. As an academic institution, we firmly believe that the process of scientific inquiry is the appropriate way to address those issues. At the same time, Harvard stands behind its faculty review processes, which are thorough and fair and which apply to all faculty, regardless of public interest in the particular matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret L. Dale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Margaret L. Dale
Dean for Faculty and
Research Integrity
Harvard Medical School