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August 22, 2006

Derek Bok
President, Harvard University
Office of the President
Massachusetts Hall
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear President Bok:

I was forwarded a copy of a letter that is being sent to you by Robert Weissman, a graduate of Harvard Law School and editor of the *Multinational Monitor*. While I thoroughly endorse what Mr. Weissman has written to you, I would like to expand on his views, and have recruited other alumni to join me in sending the letter below to you.

With that as backdrop, enclosed is our letter on the matter of the investigation into Professor Chester Douglass's scientific integrity.

Sincerely,



Albert W. Burgstahler, PhD, '53
Professor Emeritus of Chemistry
The University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS 66045

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Dear President Bok:

We, the undersigned graduates of Harvard, are disturbed by the charge that a Harvard Professor, Chester Douglass, first hid, then misrepresented, his graduate student's PhD dissertation, which found a "robust" association between fluoridated water and an increased risk of osteosarcoma in young boys, a frequently fatal disease (1).

Quite frankly, it surprises us that Professor Douglass was ever put in charge of such a sensitive research issue as this, since he is well known as a promoter of fluoridation and also known to have strong financial ties to industries (Colgate and Delta Dental) which could be exposed to significant liabilities if fluoride is shown to cause cancer (2).

We were very disappointed that the brief statement, issued by Harvard on August 15, exonerating Professor Douglass of all charges in this matter, gave no explanation as to why the damning evidence produced by the Environmental Working Group (EWG) was dismissed (3).

There is nothing in the Harvard statement that responds to the substance of this concern and it is hard to see how a thorough investigation could have been conducted without even contacting the organization (EWG) that brought the charge.

While we understand that Professor Douglass has brought millions of dollars of research money into the University from both governmental and private sources, no amount of money should be allowed to obfuscate the demands for Harvard to continue to represent the highest standards of academic integrity - and seen to be doing so. Leaving the public with this 4-paragraph statement simply does not do this.

As it stands now, Harvard's failure to release even a basic explanation is neither fair to Dr. Elise Bassin nor to the public that ultimately funded this work. It isn't even fair to Professor Douglass himself. For, without a cogent explanation, the assumption will be made by many, including ourselves, that this has been an exercise in which Harvard is merely "protecting its own."

We believe this matter merits further review from the President's office, and a fuller and more open public accounting to remove any taint of a Harvard "whitewash." Ultimately, the country looks to you, President Bok, to uphold the University's motto: "Veritas" (truth).

We look forward to your prompt reply in this matter.

- 1) EWG complaint: <http://www.ewg.org/issues/fluoride/20050627/index.php>
- 2) FAN history: <http://www.fluoridealert.org/harvard/>
- 3) Harvard statement:
http://web.med.harvard.edu/sites/RELEASES/html/8_15Douglass.html

Signed:



Albert W. Burgstahler, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, The University of Kansas; Editor, *Fluoride*, co-author, *Fluoridation: The Great Dilemma* (1978), Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, AM '50, PhD '53

Phillip Allen, MD, Harvard Medical School, '54

Naomi Flack, EdM, Harvard Graduate School of Education, '64

Roy Flack, LLB, Harvard Law School, '64; MBA, Harvard Business School, '66

Antone G. Jacobson, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, The University of Texas at Austin, Harvard College, '51

Stephen M. Koral, Dentist, AM, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, '70; DMD, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, '80.

Kathryn Lee, EdM, Harvard Graduate School of Education, '94

Tyler Graham Neill, Senior, Harvard College

Richard J. Perry, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, St. Lawrence University, Harvard College, '65

Eleanor Prentiss, BA, Harvard's Extension, '67

Richard Shames, MD, author *Feeling Fat, Fuzzy or Frazzled?* Harvard College, '67

Caroline Snyder, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology, MA, Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, '56, PhD, '66.