



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration  
Silver Spring, MD 20993

July 27, 2011

VIA E-MAIL AND FACSIMILE

Colleen M. Kelley  
National President  
The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)  
1750 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Ms. Kelley,

Thank you for your letter to the Food and Drug Administration of July 11, 2011, expressing your concerns surrounding FDA testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health (“the Subcommittee”).

I share your views regarding the dedication and professionalism of our employees who work in the field of public health protection, and I share your understanding of the nature and scope of our HHS/FDA negotiated agreement dealing with employee selection in the foreign inspection program. FDA is able to conduct successful inspections because it has effective investigators who have both substantive knowledge and good judgment. It is through this talented workforce that FDA is able to protect the public health.

The FDA and the NTEU understand and have demonstrated the importance of committing resources to foreign inspections and both have tried to adapt quickly to the changing marketplace. Under our Collective Bargaining Agreement, we have agreed that fulfilling the public health mission comes first. As we consider every option to adjust to the increasingly globalized marketplace, we will continue to work with NTEU on ways in which FDA can protect the public health.

I expect to have the opportunity to state for the hearing record the views contained in this letter.

Sincerely,

Margaret A. Hamburg, M.D.