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June 26, 2007

Dr. Elias Zerhouni
Director
National Institutes of Health
1 Center Drive
Mail Stage Code 122, Room B-155
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Director Zerhouni:

We are writing in response to a letter we recently received from Samuel H. Wilson, Deputy Director for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). In that letter, Dr. Wilson suggested that it was necessary to release a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for the publication of *Environmental Health Perspectives* before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform completed its inquiry into the matter because “[f]urther delays could add extra costs to the contract and potentially jeopardize the timely publication of the journal.”¹

Given that our goal for this inquiry is to help NIEHS better achieve its mission, we take Dr. Wilson’s concerns regarding *Environmental Health Perspectives* seriously. We do not object to the release of the RFP prior to the completion of the Committee’s inquiry, provided that you are able to ensure that the new RFP not suffer from the same shortcomings as the RFP released by NIEHS in October 2006. Those shortcomings included concerns about conflicts of interest; the inappropriate stifling of competition for the contract; and failure to include valuable content and services.

While we understand the legitimate need to continue outsourcing certain functions related to publishing *Environmental Health Perspectives*, decision-making authority regarding any substantive content within the journal should remain under the auspices of NIEHS. Moreover, both the government employees and contractors working on *Environmental Health Perspectives* must be given the budget and leadership which enables them to maintain the journal’s place as one of the most influential environmental health journals in the world.

¹ Letter from Samuel H. Wilson, Deputy Director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, to Rep. Henry A. Waxman (June 8, 2007).

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We appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, you may contact us directly or your staff may contact Greg Dotson or Erik Jones with the Committee staff at (202) 225-4407.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Chairman



Dennis J. Kucinich
Chairman
Domestic Policy Subcommittee

cc: Tom Davis
Ranking Minority Member

Darrell E. Issa
Ranking Minority Member
Domestic Policy Subcommittee