TOM DAVIS, VIRGINIA,
CHAIRMAN

DAN BURTON, INDIANA
CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA
JOHN M. McHUGH, NEW YORK
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA
STEVEN C. LATOURETTE, OHIO
DOUG OSE, CALIFORNIA
RON LEWIS, KENTUCKY
JO ANN DAVIS, VIRGINIA
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA
CHRIS CANNON, UTAH
ADAM H. PUTNAM, FLORIDA
EDWARD L. SCHROCK, VIRGINIA
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., TENNESSEE
NATHAN DEAL, GEORGIA
CANDICE MILLER, MICHIGAN
TIM MURPHY, PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO
JOHN R. CARTER, TEXAS
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
PATRICK J. TIBERI, OHIO
KATHERINE HARRIS, FLORIDA

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515–6143

MAJORITY (202) 225–5074
FACSIMILE (202) 225–3974
MINORITY (202) 225–5051
TTY (202) 225–6852

www.house.gov/reform

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA,
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA
MAJOR R. OWENS, NEW YORK
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, PENNSYLVANIA
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS
JOHN F. TIERNEY, MASSACHUSETTS
WM. LACY CLAY, MISSOURI
DIANE E. WATSON, CALIFORNIA
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, MASSACHUSETTS
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER,
MARYLAND
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JIM COOPER, TENNESSEE
BETTY McCOLLUM, MINNESOTA

BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT,
INDEPENDENT

December 22, 2004

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We respectfully request that you reconsider the use of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Immunization Program 317 funds for the purchase of imported flu vaccine. We are also asking you to reimburse the National Immunization Program's account for any funds that have already been spent on purchasing this flu vaccine. While we fully support your plans to import flu vaccine to make up for part of the shortfall caused by the closing of the Chiron facility in October, we are concerned that this purchase may be at the expense of the states' ability to purchase necessary pediatric vaccines.

The 317 program is an important public health initiative that allows states to ensure that children who do not qualify for the Vaccines for Children program can receive routinely recommended immunizations. Unfortunately, because of increased costs and decreased funding, this program is serving fewer children today than it did five years ago, and some states are not able to provide all of the routinely recommended vaccines to children eligible for this program. According to the testimony of Dr. Robert Stroube, Virgina's Commissioner of Health, Virginia, for example, does not have adequate 317 funding to immunize all the children who rely on the program against pnuemoccocal disease.[1] If this program has to bear the additional costs of purchasing flu vaccine, the program will serve even fewer children.

States may have some balances left in their 317 account, monies which must be used by the end of this calendar year. However, it is our understanding that states are purchasing pediatric vaccines with that funding, and little if any of those funds will be left unspent.

---

[1]Committee on Government Reform, *Hearing: A Review of This Year's Flu Season*, 108th Cong. (Feb. 12, 2004).

Promoting both childhood vaccination and flu immunization must be public health priorities, but one should not come at the expense of the other.

Sincerely,

Tom Davis
Chairman

Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member