



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

October 28, 2003

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Waxman:

In response to your Oct. 27 letter, I must emphatically set the record straight regarding your assertions that HHS created a "hit list" of scientists researching HIV/AIDS, human sexuality and other behaviors and that creation of this list was an "inside job" at HHS.

Your assertions have proven to be wrong.

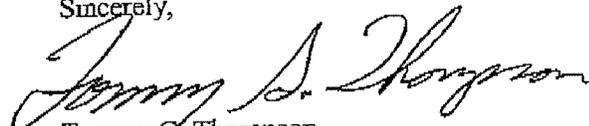
As I am sure you know by now, the Traditional Values Coalition is saying publicly in the media that it created the list in question. And congressional staff have also said they were involved in the list as well as regularly reviewing HHS grants. These parties claim they gathered their information from data readily available to the public via the Internet.

As I have repeatedly stated, HHS and its leadership team create and support an environment of solid scientific research. The integrity of the leaders of our institutions is beyond reproach.

Since coming to HHS, I have made responding to concerns of members of Congress a priority. We take the letters we receive seriously and work diligently to find answers and respond promptly. We will continue to do so. Likewise, I ask that you take greater consideration into whether the concerns raised in letters are based in fact or whimsy.

We are always open to hearing concerns or ideas on how we can better serve the public, but all would be better served if these views would be fact-based and expressed in a constructive manner. Dr. Zerhouni and I are committed to supporting good science and the integrity of scientific decision-making. It becomes difficult to work toward this goal when reckless claims are made.

Sincerely,



Tommy G. Thompson