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FACT SHEET

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) promotes and protects the public health by ensuring that consumers have access to safe and effective therapies, foods, cosmetics, and medical products. It is one of the world's most admired consumer protection agencies and is widely respected for its leadership in science-based regulation. FDA-regulated products account for approximately 25 cents of every consumer dollar spent in the United States.

THE PROBLEM

In recent years, the public financial commitment, in the form of appropriations from Congress, has increased much more slowly than costs have risen. New challenges, such as protecting the public from avian flu and bioterrorism, have drawn additional funding from traditional activities. New public health initiatives have not received adequate financial support, including the Critical Path Initiative to modernize the drug development process. Other pressing needs are underfunded, such as helping consumers make sound dietary choices to prevent chronic diseases, and ensuring the safety of the vast array of products that FDA regulates. In addition, public confidence in the FDA needs to be maintained at the highest level. In 2008 the FDA's own Science Advisory Board concluded that the FDA lacked the ability to properly perform its job due to insufficient resources.

THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance for a Stronger FDA unites a broad group of patient groups, consumer advocates, biomedical research advocates health professionals and industry to work to increase FDA's appropriations. It is supported by leading public health advocates, including three former HHS Secretaries and seven FDA Commissioners. The Alliance is designed to be a multi-year effort to (1) assure the FDA has sufficient resources to protect patients and consumers and (2) maintain public confidence and trust in the FDA. The credibility of the Alliance depends upon the breadth of its membership, which is why we need your support and participation.

THE SOLUTION

The FDA's ability to operate a modern, scientifically-based program must be strengthened. Similar to the effort that doubled the NIH budget, we will speak out on the need for significant additional funding for FDA. We hope to ensure that FDA has the funds to accomplish its mission of getting safe and effective therapies, foods, cosmetics and medical products into the hands of consumers and patients, and ensuring the safety and public confidence in those products while in the marketplace.

Since 2007 we have worked directly with policymakers to advocate for increased appropriations. We are conducting a national campaign to educate the public, media and policymakers on the need for a stronger FDA. We are building awareness of the current deficiencies and new challenges, as we build a case for increased appropriations. With your help, we can continue to advance this important effort to protect the public health.

JOIN THE ALLIANCE

Ladd Wiley is Executive Director of the Alliance; he can be reached at 202-887-4211. Steven Grossman is Deputy Executive Director; he can be reached at (301) 539-9660. Detailed information about membership of the Alliance can also be found on our web site at www.StrengthenFDA.org.