



July 21, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you work to develop the President's budget for Fiscal Year 2011, we respectfully urge you to make the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) a major priority. Consistent funding increases over a sustained period of time are essential to restoring the agency's capacity to handle a rapidly growing list of complex public health responsibilities. The agency's FY 10 staffing level from budget authority appropriations is the same as it was in 1994.

As you know, FDA regulates products that represent nearly 25 percent of consumer spending in America. However, today's FDA faces severe resource constraints due to years of chronic underfunding and an exponential increase in the agency's public health responsibilities including serious threats such as bioterrorism, the H1N1 Influenza Virus, and the increasing globalization of the products FDA regulates.

As a trade association that represents U.S. manufacturers across the full supply chain for plastics food and drug packaging, personal care products and medical devices, SPI has long been a strong advocate for increased funding to sustain a robust FDA on the leading edge of science. SPI has been a particularly vocal supporter of continued funding for the Food Contact Notification program, which has significantly expedited the safety evaluation and approval process for novel food-contact substances without compromising the safety and efficacy of innovative food packaging materials.

SPI believes strongly that a well-resourced FDA is critical to ensure that sound science prevails in the evaluation of plastics materials and technologies used in life-saving medical devices and in packaging that preserves and protects our nation's supply of food and drugs from spoilage and intentional adulteration.

Continuing chronic underfunding of FDA affects our public health, hinders our economy and compromises our national security. We are requesting at least a twenty percent increase over the FY11 budget.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kyra M. Mumbauer'.

Kyra M. Mumbauer
Director - Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Packaging Materials Committee

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