



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary
Office of the General Counsel

Public Health Division
Room 2B-50, NIH Bldg. 31
31 Center Dr., MSC 2111
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-2111
(301) 496-6043
Fax (301) 402-1034

May 19, 2014

Mr. Paul Alan Levy
1600 20th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 588-1000

Dear Mr. Levy:

We have reviewed your May 14, 2014 blog post. Upon further reflection, we agree with you that a cause of action does not exist for defamation of the government. We also agree that the mock letter from Dr. Koob would be considered to be parody, which we understand to be protected under the First Amendment.

We were concerned primarily that the mock interview with Dr. White, read on its own, might have been considered by members of the public to have actually occurred, notwithstanding several odd passages, and would therefore be misleading to the public, and a disservice to Dr. White. We regret any confusion that our letter may have caused about our perspective or intentions in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dale D. Berkley".

Dale D. Berkley, Ph.D., J.D.
Senior Attorney