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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Microbiology
and Immunology

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94143

July 8, 1987

The Honorable John Garamendi
The Senate of California
State Capitol, Room 4081
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Garamendi:

Professor Peter Vogt of the University of Southern California has sent me copies of his correspondence with you concerning the misguided efforts by the State of California to enforce Title 17 of the Administrative Radiation Control Regulations.

Those of us engaged in modern medical research are aware of the risks and responsibilities of working with even the relatively small amounts of radioisotopes used in our studies, and we welcome assistance from state and local regulatory officers to maintain safety in our laboratories. However, the militant searches of our laboratories for what are often trivial infringements of the regulations and the levying of criminal indictments against the scientists involved can only have negative effects upon the practice of science in California. Trainees will be discouraged from entering a field where they are subjected to such harassment, and established scientists will seek employment in states more congenial to their enterprise.

I am grateful to you for the efforts you are making to restore sanity to the monitoring of radioisotope use in our laboratories.

Sincerely,

Harold E. Varmus, M.D.
American Cancer Society
Professor of Molecular Virology

HEV/jm

cc: Peter Vogt