

**National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Legislative Report to Council
September 2010**

Hearings, Briefings and Congressional Contacts

On June 15, the Senate HELP Committee (Senator Tom Harkin [D-IA], Chairman) held a hearing on issues related to the Gulf oil spill. Dr. Aubrey Miller, Supervisor for Public Health Science, NIEHS, testified on the state of the science. Other DHHS witnesses included Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy; Dr. John Howard, Director, NIOSH, CDC; and Mike Taylor, J.D., Deputy Commissioner for Foods, FDA. On June 16, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health (Representative Frank Pallone [D-NJ], Chairman) held a hearing on issues related to the Gulf oil spill. The same witnesses testified.

On July 29, Dr. Birnbaum, along with Dr. Mary Wolfe, National Toxicology Program Deputy Program Director for Policy, met with Congressional staff to answer questions about the evaluation of styrene for possible inclusion in the 12th Report on Carcinogens.

On August 3, the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Children's Health (Senator Amy Klobuchar [D-MN], Chair) held a hearing entitled "State of Research on Potential Environmental Health Factors with Autism and Related Neurodevelopment Disorders." Dr. Birnbaum testified on NIEHS research, including the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding and on recent research results related to these issues.

Current Legislation Affecting NIEHS

HR652: Skilled Trades Second Responders Act of 2009 introduced by Peter King (D-NY)

HR652 amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to establish a national program for the training, certification, registration, tracking, and integration of skilled construction workers to assist first responders in responding to disasters, including natural and manmade disasters and terrorist attacks.

Status: Referred to the House Committees on Energy & Commerce and Transportation & Infrastructure.

HR2084: Prevention, Awareness, and Research of Autoimmune Diseases Act of 2009 introduced by Patrick Kennedy (D-RI)

HR2084 amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, to award grants for research on environmental triggers that can cause the initiation of autoimmune diseases in genetically predisposed individuals.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Energy & Commerce.

HR3891: Safe and Healthy Housing Act of 2009 introduced by Robert Brady (D-PA)

HR3891 directs the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to evaluate the health effects of housing-related health hazards for which limited research or understanding of causes or associations exists.

Status: Referred to the House Committees on Energy & Commerce, Financial Services, and Agriculture.

HR4160: Environmental Hormone Disruption Research Act of 2009 introduced by Louise Slaughter (D-NY)

HR4160 amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to establish a comprehensive program to: (1) research the health effects on women and children that may result through disruption of the hormone systems; (2) carry out research, development, and demonstrations on technologies to mitigate the occurrence of hormone-disrupting pollutants in the environment and their unintended effects on ecological and wildlife health, in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey (USGS); and (3) coordinate U.S. research on hormone disruption with research conducted in other nations.

Status: Referred to the House Committees on Energy & Commerce and Rules.

HR4161: Women's Environmental Health and Disease Prevention Act of 2009 introduced by Louise Slaughter (D-NY)

HR4161 amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of centers to conduct multidisciplinary research on environmental factors that may be related to the development of women's health conditions.

Status: Referred to the House Committees on Energy & Commerce and Rules.

HR4190: Endocrine Disruption Prevention Act of 2009 introduced by Jim Moran (D-VA)

HR4190 amends the Public Health Service Act to authorize the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to conduct a research program on endocrine disruption, to prevent and reduce the production of, and exposure to, chemicals that can undermine the development of children before they are born and cause lifelong impairment to their health and function.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Energy & Commerce.

S2828: Endocrine Disruption Prevention Act of 2009 introduced by John Kerry (D-MA)

S2828 amends the Public Health Service Act to authorize the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to conduct a research program on endocrine disruption, to prevent and reduce the production of, and exposure to, chemicals that can undermine the development of children before they are born and cause lifelong impairment to their health and function.

Status: Referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions.

HR4456: BPA-Free Kids Act of 2009 introduced by Anthony Weiner (D-NY)

HR4456 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, to conduct research to increase understanding of the health effects of BPA exposure in all age groups and in pregnant women.

Status: Referred to the House Committee on Energy & Commerce.

S753: BPA-Free Kids Act of 2009 introduced by Charles Schumer (D-NY)

S753 requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, to conduct research to increase understanding of the health effects of BPA exposure in all age groups and in pregnant women.

Status: Referred to the Senate Committee Commerce, Science, & Transportation.

S2858: Brittany Wilkinson Mitochondrial Disease Research and Treatment Enhancement Act introduced by Barbara Boxer (D-CA)

S2858 establishes within the Office of the Director of NIH at the Division of Program Coordination, Planning and Strategic Initiatives, an office to be known as the Office of Mitochondrial Disease. The Director of this Office shall develop, make publicly available, and implement a written plan to facilitate and coordinate research into mitochondrial disease. In developing the plan, the Director shall consult with many Directors and heads including the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

Status: Referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions.

S3224: Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2010 introduced by Tom Udall (D-NM)

S3224 amends the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining. It establishes a grant program relating to the epidemiological impacts of uranium mining and milling. The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall administer the program through the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2016.

Status: Referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

HR5320: Assistance, Quality, and Affordability Act of 2010 introduced by Henry Waxman (D-CA)

HR5320 amends the Safe Drinking Water Act to increase assistance for States, water systems, and disadvantaged communities; to encourage good financial and environmental management of water systems; to strengthen the EPA's ability to enforce the requirements of the Act; to reduce lead in drinking water; to strengthen the endocrine disruptor screening program; and to study the presence of pharmaceuticals and personal care products in sources of drinking water. EPA must consult NIEHS on the plan for the study.

Status: Passed the House on 30 July 2010 at 12:15 a.m.

HR5786: Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 introduced by Janice Schakowsky (D-IL)

HR 5786 amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safe use of cosmetics. NIEHS is a member of the Interagency Council on Cosmetic Safety established by the Act.

Status: Referred to the House Committees on Energy & Commerce and Education & Labor.

HR5820: Toxic Chemicals Safety Act of 2010 introduced by Bobby Rush (D-IL)

On July 22, 2010, Representative Bobby Rush (D-IL) introduced HR5820, the Toxic Chemicals Safety Act of 2010. Section 27 would require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a Science Advisory Board on Children's Health and Toxic Substances. Members of the Board would include representatives from NIEHS, NTP, and NCI.

Status: referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

HR6017: Gulf Coast Health Monitoring and Research Program Act of 2010 introduced by Lois Capps (D-CA)

On July 30, 2010, Representative Lois Capps (D-CA) introduced HR6017, the Gulf Coast Health Monitoring and Research Program Act of 2010. The bill would require the Secretary of HHS, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Commerce and the Administrator of EPA, to establish a short-term and long-term comprehensive health screening, monitoring, and research program for oil spill workers and vulnerable residents, and on food safety affected by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Specifically, the program would be required to include research on the exposure of workers and vulnerable residents to oil, dispersants, and other chemicals and physical hazards during the clean-up

effort, including: (1) information about the use of personal protective equipment, (2) biological sampling where appropriate, and (3) information on such exposure of workers and vulnerable residents who may be more susceptible due to their age, preexisting health status, pregnancy status, or other factors determined by the Secretary. NIEHS was not specifically mentioned, but the requirements of the bill would affect planned NIEHS follow-up research.

Status: referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.