

Harvard Center for Risk Analysis



October 21, 1991

202-637-1500

David L. Greenberg  
Vice President, Government Affairs  
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.  
The Colorado Building  
1341 G Street, NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Greenberg,

The Harvard Center for Risk Analysis was created in August 1989 to promote a reasoned public response to health, safety, and environmental hazards. Currently, America devotes a major share of national resources to minor health risks while neglecting relatively serious health risks. Our mission is to advance public health by incorporating the principles of risk analysis into training programs, scientific research, and public policy. The enclosed Center Annual Report highlights the principles that govern the Center's deliberations and the nature of our activities.

During our first year, we offered a reasoned, independent voice to the political debate in Washington about air toxics legislation. In particular, we exposed some serious weaknesses in the federal government's risk assessment process while pinpointing some drawbacks to writing simplistic risk numbers into law. For the future, we advocated a scientific approach to the assessment of the residual health risks from air toxics. Although the "risk debate" in Congress is far from resolved, it is apparent that improvements in risk assessment will be necessary within the next ten years to assure sound implementation of the upcoming amendments to the Clean Air Act.

In our second year, we played a pivotal role in the congressional debate on fuel economy standards. In particular, we have urged consideration of the safety risks associated with smaller vehicles. We continue to emphasize this theme.

Currently, we have major projects underway in carcinogen classification, risk assessment, public health priorities, and the use (and misuse) of risk numbers in environmental legislation. Looking beyond the urgency of the clean air and fuel economy issues, people are beginning to recognize that our nation's approach to managing health risks is deeply flawed. The Center seeks to participate in a longrun national effort to enhance public discussion about risk. Our strategy is to train young professionals how to think about risk in a balanced way, to target limited technical and human resources at the most important problems, and to participate vigorously in public policy debates about risk.

The Center has been launched primarily with gifts from the following corporations: the Amoco Company, Bethlehem Steel Corporation, British Petroleum, Chevron Corporation, The Coca Cola Company, Dow Chemical Company, Eastman Kodak Company, Exxon Corporation, General Electric Corporation, General Motors, Inland Steel Industries, Merck & Company, Mobil Oil Corporation, the Monsanto Company, Pepsico Incorporated, Rohm and Haas Company, Texaco, Union Carbide Corporation, and Westinghouse Corporation. Government support has also been provided by the Centers for Disease Control, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the National Science Foundation. The Center is now looking to a broader base of industrial sources to supply critical funding for the years ahead.

In the course of establishing the Center, we have collaborated with leaders of other risk-related organizations. Paul Portney of Resources for the Future, Roger McClellan of CIIT, and Thomas Grumbly of Clean Sites provided helpful advice. We owe a special debt to Vincent Gregory, retired chairman of Rohm and Haas Company, who helped us create a vision for the Center while persuading skeptics at Harvard of the merit of our mission.

I would like the opportunity to meet with you personally to discuss the future of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis. In particular, I am requesting \$25,000 in financial support in 1992 and 1993 that can help the Center expand its public policy activities. It is important for me to learn more about the risk-related challenges that you face.

Please do not hesitate to call me directly if you have any questions about the Center. I will call in the next month to determine when we might be able to get together.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John D. Graham, Ph.D.

Director, Center for Risk Analysis  
Professor of Policy and Decision Sciences