



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

WASHINGTON, DC 20201



April 30, 2018

Michael A. Carome, M.D.  
Director, Health Research Group  
Public Citizen  
1600 20th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Dr. Carome:

This letter is in response to your March 2018, letters to Inspector General Daniel R. Levinson and your April 11, 2018, letter to Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, in which you urged the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to begin a formal investigation into matters described in a March 17, 2018, article published by *The New York Times* regarding a National Institutes of Health (NIH) study funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. The Secretary has asked us to respond to your letter. The study compares the effects of moderate alcohol consumption with alcohol abstinence on cardiovascular health. *The New York Times* article presented certain allegations about how five alcoholic beverage manufacturers became involved in financially supporting the study.

OIG shares your view that the public trust in the integrity of NIH-funded research studies is very important. We take allegations of wrongdoing seriously and are reviewing the issues and concerns raised in your correspondence. Based upon the results of the review, we will take action as deemed appropriate.

Thank you for contacting us regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Christopher Seagle  
Director of External Affairs