

For Immediate Release:  
Sept. 16, 2015

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## **Senate Should Reject President's Nominee to Be the Next FDA Commissioner**

### ***Statement of Dr. Michael Carome, Director, Public Citizen's Health Research Group***

The Senate should reject President Barack Obama's [nomination](#) of Dr. Robert Califf to be the next commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). His nomination undoubtedly comes as welcome news to the pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers, but is bad news for patients and public health.

During his tenure at Duke University, Califf racked up a long history of extensive financial ties to multiple drug and medical device companies, including Amgen, AstraZeneca, Eli Lilly, Johnson & Johnson, Merck Sharp & Dohme and Sanofi-Aventis, to name a few. Strikingly, no FDA commissioner has had such close financial relationships with industries regulated by the agency prior to being appointed.

Califf's appointment as FDA commissioner would accelerate a decades-long trend in which agency leadership too often makes decisions that are aligned more with the interests of industry, rather than those of public health and patients.

The Senate should reject Califf and demand that the president nominate someone who has not been so closely connected to FDA-regulated industries and is therefore better suited to protect public health.

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