



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

JUL 14 2008

Assistant Secretary for Health
Office of Public Health and Science
Washington D.C. 20201

Arthur W. Bracey, M.D.
Chair, Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability
1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 250
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Dr. Bracey:

I would like to thank you for your leadership over the last several years as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Blood Safety and Availability. This has not gone unnoticed and I want to congratulate you for your nomination to serve an additional year.

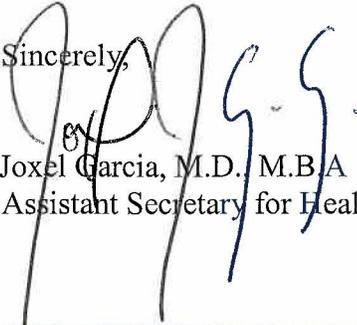
The discussion and the recommendations made by the Committee at its January 2008 meeting are substantial to supplying an additional layer of security to the safety of blood products. This area of new technology is exciting and has generated much discussion within the Department.

The Department fully supports a cooperative effort within its public health agencies together with stakeholders, to advance the development and validation of pathogen reduction technologies for all transfusable blood components. We are committed to providing regulatory, scientific, and surveillance advice to facilitate the development of such products. This summer the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute will review the current status of pathogen reduction, identify primarily critical non-infectious related research needs, and identify actions that could advance this important area.

Funding to support any new initiative is always a challenge; however, with the support of the Department, its operating divisions, and other stakeholders, this additional layer of security could become a reality. In the long run, cost neutralization and even cost reduction/avoidance could be possible with elimination of procedures (e.g. irradiation and leukoreduction) and/or reduction of emerging transfusion transmitted infectious diseases.

Please express my appreciation to the Committee and continue to update me on the progress of pathogen reduction.

Sincerely,


Joxel Garcia, M.D. M.B.A.
Assistant Secretary for Health