



HEALTH PHYSICS SOCIETY

Specialists in Radiation Safety

December 22, 2017

Rep. Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Chairman Smith,

As the President of the Health Physics Society, I am writing you to express the Society's strong support of H.R. 4675, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2017, which was introduced into the House of Representatives on December 13, 2017.

The Health Physics Society is a nonprofit scientific professional organization with over 4,000 members nationwide whose mission is excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety. Since its formation in 1956, the Society has represented the largest radiation safety society in the world, with a membership that includes scientists, safety professionals, physicists, engineers, attorneys and other professional from academia, industry, medical institutions, state and federal government, the national laboratories, the military, and other organizations. Society activities include encouraging research in radiation science, developing standards, and disseminating radiation safety information. Society members are involved in understanding, evaluating, and controlling the potential risks from radiation relative to the benefits it offers the general population.

As introduced in the House, H.R. 4675 ensures the continuation and enhancement of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Low-Dose Radiation Research Program, which focuses on the health effects of ionizing radiation in the low dose range. The bill also directs DOE to coordinate with the National Science and Technology Council and consult with various other agencies including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Institutes of Health, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Defense, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Homeland Security.

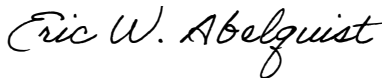
A greater understanding of the effects of low dose radiation on humans will not only add to our body of knowledge, but will also enable us to make better decisions on what are the proper

levels, procedures and protections needed when our citizens are subject to exposure to sources of low dose radiation.

Previously, while the program was fully operational within DOE, great strides were made in understanding the biological responses of humans (and other animal) cells to low doses. The research identified several protective responses by the cells exposed to low dose radiation, in contrast to the damaging changes in cells induced by high radiation dose. It is critical that additional research be conducted to link these responses at the cellular level to changes in cancer frequency in humans. The United States was once the leader in radiobiology research, but due to DOE's decision to discontinue the program, the country has fallen woefully behind, and the vast amounts of data generated by the research already performed is sitting idle, waiting for more study and analysis.

Please feel free to get back to me with any questions you may have on this legislation or any subject involving radiation safety. Both the entire Health Physics Society and I stand ready to assist you as issues of radiation safety come before you and your staff. If you want to learn more about the Society, please visit our website: www.hps.org.

Sincerely,



Eric Abelquist, Ph.D., CHP
President
Health Physics Society