



July 24, 2013

The Honorable Thomas Perez
Secretary
Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Perez:

On behalf of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), I am writing to congratulate you on your confirmation as the Secretary of Labor.

As the workplace continues to change and become more diversified and as the need for workplace health and safety continues to expand globally, AIHA believes your appointment as Secretary of Labor is one of the most important appointments of this Administration. The worker health and safety agenda is a long one, and we believe one of the ways it needs to be addressed is to bring diverse viewpoints together.

As you move forward addressing the many workplaces and economic problems facing our country, we wish to pass along four very important issues for you to consider when addressing the specific issue of occupational safety and health.

- 1) Of immediate importance is the continuing threat of sequestration and its impact on occupational safety and health. With fewer appropriations AIHA is concerned that worker safety and health will suffer with the reduction of OSHA consultations and enforcement. AIHA hopes you will do everything possible to see that adequate dollars are allocated to protect worker safety and health.
- 2) A second area of concern is the continued breakdown of the regulatory process, resulting in considerable delay in finalizing rules, regulations and standards that protect workers. AIHA believes protection of workers is compromised through the extensive delays that are incurred when proposing and finalizing new rules. AIHA offers you our assistance in any effort to amend this regulatory process.
- 3) A third area of concern is more of a long-term goal. We urge you to provide OSHA with any assistance needed to assume a leadership position working with stakeholders to seek out a solution to the long-standing problem of how best to update the permissible exposure limits (PELs). It is unconscionable that workers in the United States are covered by PELs adopted some 40 or more years ago. The only way for this effort to succeed is with the support of you and the administration. We urge you to consider this a priority for the Agency.

- 4) Finally, we wish to add our support for the continued leadership of OSHA by Dr. David Michaels. Dr. Michaels has been a true supporter of worker safety and health and has worked with AIHA and other stakeholders on a host of issues. His continued leadership is important as OSHA faces a reduction in appropriations as well as his continued leadership and efforts in support of updating the PELs.

With nearly 75 years of commitment to the protection of workers, their community, and the environment, AIHA looks forward to working with you to see that every worker goes home healthy and safe. AIHA is one of the largest international associations serving the needs of occupational and environmental health and safety professionals practicing industrial hygiene in industry, government, labor, academic institutions and independent organizations. The AIHA mission is to promote healthy and safe environments by advancing the science, principles, practice and value of industrial and occupational hygiene. AIHA is not only committed to protecting and improving worker health, but the health and well-being of all people in our communities.

While I am sure you are hearing from many stakeholders in labor and industry I also offer you the opportunity to meet with AIHA to hear from those who serve on the front line of worker health and safety each and every day. Should you have a desire to do so please contact AIHA and we will work with your staff to set a date and time.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any immediate questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Dawson, CIH, CSP
AIHA President

cc: AIHA Board of Directors
Peter O'Neil, AIHA Executive Director
Aaron Tripler, AIHA Director Government Affairs