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COMMITTEES:
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ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE
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SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

July 31, 2017

Thomas E. Price, M.D.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Secretary Price and Director Collins,

During my time as Chairman of the Environment and Public Works committee, I took a keen interest in the re-labeling of glyphosate, commonly referred to as “RoundUp”, due to the widespread use of the product in my state of Oklahoma. RoundUp has been an important part in making US agriculture second to none.

As you may be aware, the EPA is reviewing glyphosate as part of their customary 15-year re-labeling process used for all pesticides. After a lengthy process, the EPA’s Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) made the recommendation in March that glyphosate is not likely a carcinogenic. While more work will still need to be done at EPA, the recommendation of the SAP is a significant first step.

While the US EPA was reviewing glyphosate, an international organization loosely affiliated with the World Health Organization (WHO) called the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), concluded that glyphosate was a likely carcinogenic. However, recent news articles have cast serious doubt on that conclusion based on the suppression of a scientific study that was conducted by your organization.

Reuters reported that a study called the Agricultural Health Study (AHS), a multi-year, real world medical survey of farmers who use agricultural herbicides and pesticides, had been completed by the National Institutes of Health two years prior to the decision by IARC to classify glyphosate as a carcinogenic. The AHS concluded that glyphosate did not cause cancer. Moreover, the scientist who was involved in the AHS and led the IARC monograph on glyphosate knew of the existence of the AHS and the conclusions drawn therein. However,

because IARC rules prevent the consideration of works not yet made public, the results of the AHS were not taken into consideration.

There have been several excuses made as to why the AHS has not been made public like “space constraints” and “there was too much to fit into one scientific paper.” I am not familiar with any concerns for space or too much content as being prohibitive in publishing a publically-funded study.

Given the importance of ensuring scientific integrity, I ask for you to look into the status of the AHS and if the study is complete, that you make public all aspects of the study as it relates to glyphosate. We have an obligation to make sure that publically funded studies, like the AHS, are made available as soon as they are complete.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please reach out Jennie Wright (jennie_wright@inhofe.senate.gov) on my staff.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator