

IDSA

Infectious Diseases Society of America

**2003-2004
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President
Joseph R. Dalovisio, MD
OCHSNER CLINIC
New Orleans, LA

President-Elect
Walter Stamm, MD
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, MEDICAL CENTER
Seattle, WA

Vice President
Martin J. Blaser, MD
NEW YORK SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
New York, NY

Secretary-Treasurer
Barbara Murray, MD,
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL SCHOOL
Houston, TX

Immediate Past President
W. Michael Scheld, MD
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Charlottesville, VA

John G. Bartlett, MD
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
OF MEDICINE
Baltimore, MD

Kathryn M. Edwards, MD
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
Nashville, TN

Henry Masur, MD
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
Bethesda, MD

Larry K. Pickering, MD
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL
AND PREVENTION
Atlanta, GA

Thomas C. Quinn, MD
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
Baltimore, MD

David A. Reiman, MD
STANFORD UNIVERSITY
VA Palo Alto Healthcare System
Palo Alto, CA

Larry J. Strausbaugh, MD
PORTLAND VA MEDICAL CENTER
Portland, OR

Alan D. Tice, MD
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
Honolulu, HI

PIDS Liaison
Richard F. Jacobs, MD
ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
Little Rock, AR

Executive Director
Mark A. Leasure

IDSA Headquarters
66 Canal Center Plaza
Suite 600
Alexandria, VA 22314

TEL: (703) 299-0200

FAX: (703) 299-0204

EMAIL ADDRESS:

info@idsociety.org

WEBSITE:

www.idsociety.org

6856 '04 AUG 16 10:12

August 11, 2004

Tommy G. Thompson, JD
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

**Re: Response to Department of Health and Human Services' Initiative
and Task Force Formation [Docket No. 2004S-0233]: Solicitation of
Comments on Stimulating Innovation in Medical Technologies**

Dear Secretary Thompson:

The Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) is interested in commenting on the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) notice "Soliciting Comments on Stimulating Innovation in Medical Technologies"; 69 Fed. Reg. 29544 (May 24, 2004). This an extremely important effort, and we applaud HHS for its undertaking.

As the primary association representing more than 7,500 infectious diseases physicians and scientists, IDSA is deeply interested in how the federal government moves forward on this initiative and particularly how it will help to mitigate a growing public health crisis--the decline in pharmaceutical industry research and development (R&D) of new antibiotics. In its recently released report, "*Bad Bugs, No Drugs: As Antibiotic Discovery Stagnates, A Public Health Crisis Brews*," IDSA calls attention to the problem of increasing drug resistant bacterial pathogens and the decrease in drugs to treat them. IDSA's report outlines a number of novel administrative and legislative solutions. We do not have all of the answers, but it seems clear that powerful incentives are needed to reinvigorate industry investment into antibiotic R&D. IDSA submits its report along with this cover letter as our comments to the federal register notice referenced above.

Antibiotic discovery and development are unique in nature with many obstacles to success. These obstacles, including smaller markets and the fact that these drugs become less effective over time due to resistance, have made antibiotic R&D unappealing to most pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. Infectious diseases physicians are raising awareness about this dire situation on behalf of the tens of thousands of Americans who succumb each year and the hundreds of thousands who suffer due to resistant infections. Bacterial infections can strike anyone--the young and old, the healthy and chronically ill. As fewer new antibiotics are developed and resistance levels continue to increase, greater numbers of people are likely to be harmed. Should an epidemic or bioterrorism event occur, millions could be affected.

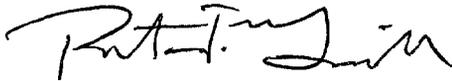
2004S-0233

CS

We believe that HHS and the federal agencies who serve on the Stimulating Innovations Task Force have important roles to play in addressing the "bad bugs, no drugs" problem. We hope to have the opportunity to work with you in the coming months to find the right combination of solutions that will sufficiently address the problem. Without the Administration's and Congress' quick action, patients may be at significantly greater risk in the near future.

Should you have any questions concerning IDSA's efforts or wish to discuss the proposed solutions outlined in the white paper, please contact me at 703-299-0202 or rguidos@idsociety.org.

Respectfully,



Robert J. Guidos, JD
Director, Public Policy & Government Relations

Enclosure: IDSA's "Bad Bugs, No Drugs" Report