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Dockets Management Branch
Food and Drug Administration
Department of Health and Human Services
Room 10-61
5630 Fishers Lane
Rockville MD 20857

Docket No. 001P-0075/CP 1

To Whom It May Concern:

Two years ago today, the Center for Reproductive Rights (formerly the Center for Reproductive Law & Policy) submitted a petition on behalf of seventy-six organizations to request that the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") switch two FDA-approved emergency contraceptive drugs ("EC") and any equivalent new drugs from prescription to over-the-counter ("OTC") status. To date, the FDA has not issued any decision on our petition, and the prescription limitation on EC continues to harm the public health. Accordingly, I write to request that you inform me of the current status of our petition, as well as the expected date for its resolution.

I also write to bring your attention to some facts recently published in a report by the Alan Guttmacher Institute. The report states that emergency contraception prevented 51,000 abortions in 2000, and the increased use of emergency contraception could be responsible for up to 43% of the 11% decline in abortion rates between 1994 and 2000.

In 2000, 1.3 million abortions were performed in the United States. If 17,000 (1.3%) pregnancies that ended in abortion occurred after the use of emergency contraceptive pills, approximately 51,000 pregnancies that would have ended in abortion were prevented. By comparison, only 0.1%, or 1,400, of the 1.4 million abortions in 1994 occurred after use of oral emergency contraceptives, and about 4,000 abortions were prevented by their use. The increase in the use of emergency contraceptive pills may account for a significant part of the recent reduction in abortions nationally: The number of abortions in 2000 was 110,000 fewer than in 1994, and an estimated 47,000 more abortions were prevented by emergency contraception in 2000 than in 1994; thus, emergency contraception could account for 43% of the decrease in abortions.

Jones RK, Darroch JE, Henshaw SK. Contraceptive Use Among U.S. Women Having Abortions in 2000-2001. Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health 2002; 34(6):294-303.

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These recent statistics are a compelling reminder of the efficacy of EC in preventing pregnancy and abortion. The sooner the OTC petition is granted, the greater the increase in these numbers and in the status of women's reproductive health in our nation.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bonnie Scott Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. There are some small, illegible initials or marks above the main signature.

Bonnie Scott Jones
Staff Attorney*

*admitted only in Massachusetts