

Michelle Petrilli, Esq.  
12 High Meadow Lane  
Newark, Delaware 19711

September 10, 2001

Ms. Kimberly Topper  
Food and Drug Administration, CDER  
Advisors and Consultants Staff, HFD-21  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, Maryland 20857

RE: docket no. 01N-0256

Dear Ms. Topper:

I was recently advised by my pain management physician, Dr. Frank Falco in Wilmington, Delaware, that he will no longer prescribe Oxycontin for his patients because of the risk of abuse; negative publicity and fear of litigation. He acknowledges that it is the best pain relief medication for my condition, but told me his practice is very large and he feels there is serious risk to his practice. I am very upset and alarmed by this. I am now forced to change doctors immediately after having a perfectly comfortable relationship with Dr. Falco and his team for a number of years. Now I have to familiarize a new practitioner about my history and condition, which is very complex. So I have already been negatively impacted by all the media discourse and stories of abuse of this product.

I practiced law for 20 years in Delaware, and used to be very athletic. I played golf, skied, enjoyed tennis and dancing. Now I am permanently disabled. I had failed lower back surgery in 1994 for three bad discs. I had numerous surgeries since then and have attempted new procedures such as intradiscal thermal therapy to try to find relief. I had numerous prescription medication regimens before finally finding that an oxycontin/lortab regimen helped me. Without oxycontin I have absolutely no quality of life. When my doctor felt compelled to discontinue oxycontin for all of his patients, he switched me to MS Contin, then a morphine patch with no success. It is my understanding that there is no product as good as oxycontin for my condition. I have confirmed this with a number of specialists as I continue to search for new ways to address my pain and help myself. I am alarmed that its availability is being curtailed by all the negative press and abuse by non law-abiding citizens. I suggest that such abuse should be addressed by education and law enforcement and not by making this product less attractive as a tool for pain management for people like myself.

After taking oxycontin, I have been able to become a more productive person. I am able to serve on a few boards of directors such as the American Red Cross of the DelMarVa Peninsula; the Center for Creative Arts and others. I am able to ride in a car again and accompany my husband

on vacations and do some more things socially. Without this medication, every waking minute is consumed by pain. Furthermore, the impact of chronic pain extends to one's entire family and friends. I was losing hope that I would ever have any quality of life. I implore the committee to publicly endorse the continued prescription of Oxycontin if needed by patients like myself in order that doctors will feel less threatened.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle L. Petrilli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small dot at the end.

Michelle L. Petrilli, Esq.