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ENERGY AND COMMERCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0530

HENRY A. WAXMAN
30TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

September 15, 2006

Dr. Edward J. Wegman
Center for Computational Statistics
George Mason University, MS 4A7
157 Science-Technology II Building
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Dr. Wegman:

I am writing to follow up on your recent testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the accompanying report you prepared regarding the work of Dr. Michael Mann.

During your testimony, you assured Chairman Barton that you were happy to have other scientists review your report. I commend you for this approach, especially since your report did not undergo a typical peer-review process prior to public release.

Dr. David Ritson, Emeritus Professor of Physics of Stanford University, has contacted me and requested that I forward to you a few, basic questions regarding your work. My understanding is that Dr. Ritson attempted to contact you directly, but has not received any response. I am enclosing a copy of his emails to you and your co-authors, Dr. Scott and Dr. Said, from July 23, July 30, and August 7, 2006.

While my staff informs me that you have extenuating circumstances for not responding, it is unfortunate that none of your co-authors could respond either. As you know, your report was critical of Dr. Mann's information sharing, stating, "[W]e judge that the sharing of research materials, data and results was haphazardly and grudgingly done."

Moreover, Dr. Ritson assures us that his request for information is far from burdensome. Dr. Ritson appears to be simply requesting basic information on your methodological approach that is not transparent from the written report. In fact, some of the questions appear to be simple "yes" or "no" questions. Your report noted that when "methodology is not fully disclosed, peers do not have the ability to replicate the work and thus independent verification is impossible." It would seem appropriate to share basic information about the methodological approach of your report with others in the scientific community on a timely basis.

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I hope that you will be able to provide Dr. Ritson with the requested information at your earliest convenience. I'd appreciate receiving the information as well so that I can share it with other interested Members of the House Energy & Commerce Committee.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton
The Honorable John Dingell
The Honorable Ed Whitfield
The Honorable Bart Stupak