



January 10, 2006

James W. Prescott, Ph.D.
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Dear Dr. Prescott:

I am writing in response to your follow-up letter to me of October 28, 2005. Dr. Zerhouni received the information copy of this letter that you sent to him, and asked me to reply on his behalf as well.

With regard to the additional calculations you submit estimating infant dietary needs for amino acids, the statements in my last response to you still stand. I also would note that extrapolating infant dietary requirements based on adult needs is not a scientifically satisfactory exercise.

This Institute, as I stated before, certainly supports breastfeeding, although sound data are lacking on benefits for the duration you advocate, or on the behavioral associations you claim. The Institute has just funded the next phase of the Adolescent Health Study, which I mentioned in my last letter to you, that may provide some data on the topic.

As you know, the composition of commercially prepared infant formula is mandated by the Infant Formula Act of 1980 and its 1986 Amendments. The Center for Food Safety and Nutrition (CFSAN) of the Food and Drug Administration is responsible for administering the regulations that were established by this Act and its Amendments. Even if the issue of infant formula composition were within the jurisdiction of the NICHD rather than the FDA, the data you present do not justify assembling a Federal Inter-Agency Task Force that you call for to review the amino acid composition of infant formula.

As indicated in previous correspondence, I see no evidence to justify reopening or revisiting the action that resulted in your removal from federal service many years ago.

Also as previously advised, I encourage you to develop proposals to test your hypotheses and submit them to the NIH or other organizations for peer review and consideration for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Duane Alexander".

Duane Alexander, M.D.
Director