AIDS L

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Dr. Peter Coggeshall
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re: Monitor's Report on "The AIDS Research Program of the NIH"

Given that the Committee interpreted its mandate to exclude a substantive examination of research strategies, it has made an excellent response to the reviewers' comments and criticisms. The Committee is certainly to be commended for a thoughtful and sensitive treatment of many contentious issues.

Particularly important were the amendations to 2-5 and 2-21, which now make a much stronger case for the committee's recommendations. There were many other comments which have been constructively incorporated, and which also improve the report substantially.

Nevertheless, I predict that many readers will be disappointed that the committee excluded AIDS research strategy in favor of "broad content, program balance and ... overall management system." This might be mitigated if there were a more precise disclaimer EARLY, both in the Executive Summary and in the preface. The charge, after all, did refer the "scope and content of NIH's AIDS research program".

My concern might be met by the inclusion of a covering letter from the Chairman, submitting the report, quoting in detail the "statement of task - 9/28/89" {Have I missed seeing that in the report itself?} and indicating his interpretation that the committee focus on management issues, and leave detailed research plan to NIH istelf. This should also accompany the Executive Summary if distributed separately from the report.

OR, change to title to "Management issues concerning NIH's AIDS research program."

This is intended to be constructive advice to ensure the most useful outcome -- and I am not implying a veto to insist on compliance.

So, my short answer is "OK": but please attend to my advice.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg