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OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT –
ACADEMIC AND HEALTH AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

March 22, 2007

John R. Seffrin, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
American Cancer Society
1599 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Seffrin:

I am writing to follow up on the January 24, 2007 letter from Dr. Michael J. Thun of your office, who responded on your behalf to my letter of January 19, 2007, asking that you send me any specific information you have supporting an allegation of scientific misconduct against UCLA researcher Dr. James Enstrom. As you know, my request was in response to your October 12, 2006 letter to the Regents about tobacco industry funding for academic research, in which you expressed concerns about specific research conducted by Dr. Enstrom.

I forwarded Dr. Thun's letter and all of its attachments to UCLA Acting Chancellor Norm Abrams, who is responsible for ensuring appropriate handling of allegations of scientific misconduct on the UCLA campus. Chancellor Abrams initiated a thorough review of the materials forwarded by Dr. Thun. He asked two senior campus officials, both of them scientists, to independently review the materials. Both officials independently reached the conclusion that these materials provide no evidence of scientific misconduct.

The materials Dr. Thun provided reflect the robust debate in the scientific literature about the research methodologies used by Dr. Enstrom in conducting the work that was the basis for his 2003 article published in the British Medical Journal. Disagreements regarding research methodology, and disputes about the soundness of scientific conclusions do not, however, constitute scientific misconduct. There is room for vehement and heartfelt disagreement about the soundness of particular scientific analysis and conclusions, and the scientific and academic community has well-established mechanisms for judging which results are ultimately deemed to withstand close and sustained scientific scrutiny. Indeed, the material Dr. Thun provided regarding the published criticisms and defenses of Dr. Enstrom's work is one example of how research can be refuted (or upheld) in open peer-reviewed scientific literature.

The University of California takes allegations of scientific misconduct seriously. I appreciate your sharing your concerns with me. I am satisfied that Chancellor Abrams conducted a careful and thorough review of the materials that were the basis of your concerns, and I support his conclusion that there is no basis for initiating a formal inquiry or investigation of scientific misconduct against Dr. Enstrom.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Wyatt R. Hume
Provost and Executive Vice President
Academic and Health Affairs

cc: Regent Blum
President Dynes
Chancellor Abrams
Academic Council Chair Oakley
General Counsel Robinson
University Auditor Reed