

JIM PETERSON, MP - CAMR SUBMISSION

February 5, 2007

Mr. Douglas Clark
Director, Patent Policy Directorate
Industry Canada
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5

Ms. Brigitte Zirger
Director, Therapeutic Products Directorate
Health Canada
1600 Scott Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Re: Review of Canada's Access to Medicines Regime

Dear Mr. Clark and Ms. Zirger:

I am writing in response to the request for comment on November 24, 2006 concerning Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR).

I wish to draw your attention to documents submitted by domestic and international stakeholders on the review of the CAMR. As you know, the innovative pharmaceutical industry in Canada, which has a significant presence here in Ontario and the GTA, is making a major contribution to the fight against disease in the developing world. I was pleased to learn of these contributions by way of the attached submissions. I also note their strong and helpful partnerships with Health Partners International (HPIC) and other such organizations.

I feel strongly that, on their own, modifications to the CAMR will only deliver limited value to patients in developing countries. The fact is that access to medicines is not the sole-or, in some countries, even the most significant-health-care challenge facing the developing world. Medicines cannot do their job effectively if patients do not also have access to safe drinking water, sufficient food, or primary health care. I would encourage the government to take a broader look at the new and emerging needs of the developing world.

Lastly, as a former Minister of International Trade with a keen interest in aid and development, I would urge the government not to weaken the anti-diversion and other necessary measures contained in the legislation.

The federal government should not consider CAMR in isolation from other policies. The health-care challenges of the developing world are broad, and Canadian aid policy should be as well.

Sincerely,
Hon. Jim Peterson