



June 8, 2004

Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Thompson:

The United States Breastfeeding Committee wishes to thank you and members of your staff at the Department of Health and Human Services for its longstanding support of breastfeeding. In particular we would like to thank you for your support of the National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign.

We are most grateful to Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Kevin Keane and Director of Media Affairs, Christina Pearson both of whom were instrumental in navigating a difficult course and insuring that the essential elements of this important campaign were preserved in spite of the overwhelming pressure exerted by the infant formula industry.

We understand that this campaign represents a significant departure from prior campaigns in that it targets the risk relationship between breastfeeding and specific diseases. While critics have argued that statements about leukemia and diabetes would be more compelling, respected scientists have agreed that more data are needed and the USBC respects that decision.

One of the main objectives of the campaign is to reach those individuals who are uninformed about the tremendous value of breastfeeding, and the risks of not breastfeeding. This broad-based campaign targets ethnic minorities and low income women who are least likely to breastfeed but most likely to have infants at risk, as well as employers, co-workers, child care workers, family, and friends who enable women to initiate and continue to breastfeed.

The USBC reaffirms its support of the campaign. Furthermore we are confident that the repository of scientific information that supports the campaign messages will continue to expand.

The United States Breastfeeding Committee remains committed to the success of this campaign and the success and support of women who breastfeed. We stand ready to assist the Department of Health and Human Services in this and future breastfeeding initiatives.

Sincerely yours,

Amy Spangler
Chair
United States Breastfeeding Committee

United States Breastfeeding Committee
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