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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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DEFENSE

June 7, 2016

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Dr. Collins:

The recent controversy regarding an International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) report entitled, "Evaluation of Five Organophosphate Insecticides and Herbicides" (IARC Monographs, Volume 112. 20 March. 2015) has elevated my awareness of this agency and the support it receives from the United States government.

According to a Reuters' investigative news report, this study concludes that glyphosate, an herbicide, is a 'probable' human carcinogen.

It is my understanding that the report findings contradict other U.S. government agency studies on the safety of glyphosate, the most commonly used herbicide in the world. In fact, the National Academies of Science just released a comprehensive report on genetically engineered crops ("Genetically Engineered Crops: Experiences and Prospects") in May 2016 and the report notes that several comprehensive international studies delink the connection between glyphosate and cancer, including the EPA's 2013 study that reaffirmed the agency's stance by saying "glyphosate is not expected to pose a cancer risk to humans." Additionally, some in academia have raised questions about the quality of the science and the transparency of the process.

Any study by IARC, regardless of its credibility, benefits from association with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its reputation as a premier research organization. The IARC study conclusions appear to be the result of a significantly flawed process; unfortunately, because the study was funded through the NIH, the conclusions will be taken more seriously than they might have been.

Millions of farmers throughout the world rely on this uniquely effective herbicide. Given the impact that diminished confidence in the use of this common and widely-used herbicide

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could have on agriculture, I am writing to request a briefing on the IARC study and the standards that NIH places on research funded by the U.S. taxpayers.

Jennifer Groover is the contact person for my office for this issue, and she can be reached at Jennifer.groover@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert B. Aderholt". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress