

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
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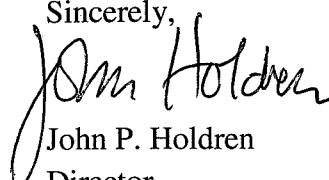
John W. Sedat, Ph.D.
University of California, San Francisco
Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics
600 16th Street
N412D, MC 2240
San Francisco, CA 94158-2517

Dr. Sedat:

Thank you for your letter of concern regarding X-ray backscatter screening at our Nation's airports. I apologize for the delay in providing this response.

The issues you raise have been studied extensively by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Department of Health and Human Services for many years, as well as by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In recent detailed discussions with my scientific staff at OSTP, representatives from those two agencies have made a strong, evidence-based case for the safety of this technology as it is being applied at airports. I am concerned, however, that the Federal government may have done a less than gold-standard job so far in communicating that case for safety to those who want to understand in fuller detail the basis of its conclusions. In the interest of greater transparency and to minimize spread of misinformation, I have asked representatives in FDA and DHS to work with OSTP to craft a detailed and clear description of the evidence for the safety of the devices in question, addressing all of the points raised in your letter.

The individuals who will be leading this effort are John L. McCrohan, Deputy Director for Technical and Radiological Initiatives at the Food and Drug Administration, and Karen R. Shelton Waters, Deputy Assistant Administrator/ Chief Administrative Officer at the Transportation Safety Authority. They have assured me they will contact you when they have completed their document, which I hope and expect will allay your concerns.

Sincerely,

John P. Holdren
Director

cc: David Agard, Ph.D.
Marc Shuman, M.D.
Robert Stroud, Ph.D.