

TAB 3 – July 26, 2010

Dear Dr. Augustine,

As you know, I have a particular interest in the SUAA discussions around substance use, abuse, and addiction. On behalf of the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium, I have submitted both written and oral comments on the record to the SMRB. I watched the June 10 videocast of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director, and was particularly intrigued by the comments of National Institute on Neurological Disorders and Stroke Director Dr. Story Landis. The NIH Neuroscience Blueprint has been used as a model by those advocating some sort of "functional" reorganization of substance use, abuse, and addiction research at NIH. Dr. Landis is a co-chair of this effort, and as she said, is a big supporter. She also said that, in the context of the SUAA discussions using the Blueprint as a model would be a mistake, that it would not accomplish the goals under discussion by the SUAA and SMRB. She specifically said that to accomplish those goals, a merger of NIDA and NIAAA would be the right path to take.

"[The Blueprint] was a voluntary aggregation - Dr. Zerhouni suggested it, we had already been discussing it, and accomplished that kind of cooperation in the intramural program.....it was a voluntary aggregation, we all agreed to put money in the pot, and I think it works extraordinarily well as a mechanism for the neuroscience institutes to collaborate and work together.

However, having seen the Blueprint in action I personally don't believe that's the best solution for accomplishing the kinds of science that really needs to be done in this very important area of research, and if I were on that subcommittee I'd be voting for a merger. And I could tell you more about why I don't think it's the appropriate thing....but I don't think it's the right model.....I just don't think it would accomplish what needs to be done here scientifically."

Given the current and ongoing discussion within the SUAA and overall SMRB, I think this is a crucial comment that should be shared with all members.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Andrew

Andrew Kessler
Principal
Slingshot Solutions
PO Box 1315
Annandale VA 22003
Andrew@slingshotsolutions.net
www.slingshotsolutions.net
(571) 426-0297