

The Containment Laboratory Community Advisory Committee

a joint committee of the City of Frederick and the Board of Frederick County Commissioners

October 9, 2012

Colonel Allan J. Darden Sr.
Commander, U.S. Army Garrison
810 Schreider Street
Fort Detrick, Maryland 21702-5000

Colonel Bernard L. DeKoning
Commander, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases
Attn: MCMR-UIZ-R
1425 Porter Street
Frederick, MD 21702-5011

Dr. J. Patrick Fitch
Director, National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center
110 Thomas Johnson Drive Suite 300
Frederick, MD 21702

Dear Commanders and Director,

The Containment Laboratory Community Advisory Committee (CLCAC) is nearing completion of two years of effort to improve communication between the high containment laboratories at Fort Detrick and the citizens of Frederick City and County.

We very much appreciate the cooperation of laboratory officials and Fort Detrick management and personnel in providing briefings and materials to us as we got underway in 2011. These materials served to orient the committee and some members of the public to better understand the work and safety programs in place at the laboratories. We have made this information available to the public via the CLCAC website. Specifically, USAMRIID's considerable assistance in brokering our meeting with CDC officials earlier this year and participation at our recent emergency preparedness forum has been very helpful.

We remain concerned however about the lack of a functional process for receiving timely responses to health and safety questions and safety-related information requested on behalf of the public. Obtaining answers has been difficult.

As we all well know, improving trust and understanding with the community will require sustained communication and transparency.

We have concluded that our mutual objectives in the community would be better met by direct quarterly meetings between representatives from the CLCAC and senior officials from the various laboratories as well as the Garrison Command group.

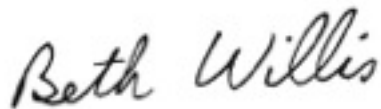
Such meetings should be structured and result in mutual, and realistic commitments between the committee and those in authority, regarding specific information that will be provided, and should include time-frames for providing responses.

We are requesting a joint quarterly meeting, involving senior officials from the Garrison, USAMRIID and NBACC, as a joint meeting would be most effective and efficient. We recommend confirming our first meeting as soon as possible.

This will help bolster public confidence and help to ensure that public concerns are being addressed at the senior management level. We are copying this letter to our federal Senators, as they have continued to express interest in the work and progress of the CLCAC.

We look forward to your response and again thank all Garrison, laboratory and other Fort Detrick personnel that have assisted our committee.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Willis".

Beth Willis
Chair, Containment Laboratory Community Advisory Committee

cc: Senator Barbara Mikulski

Senator Ben Cardin