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CALIFORNIA BUILDING
STANDARDS COMMISSION

May 2, 2008

BY FACSIMILE: 916-263-0959

The Honorable Rosario Marin
Chair, California Building Standards Commission
2525 Natomas Park Drive, Suite 130
Sacramento, CA 95833

Re: Express Terms for Proposed Building Standards of the Office of the State Fire Marshall (SFM) Regarding The 2007 California Fire Code, California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 9

Dear Secretary Marin:

We are writing in support of the L Occupancy provision included in the Express Terms being proposed by the State Fire Marshall (SFM).

We strongly believe the L-Occupancy provides important controls and safety provisions for any research and development laboratory containing hazardous materials in the State of California. The current codes developed by the International Code Council (ICC) will not support the facilities demands our industry anticipates. Approval of the L-Occupancy provision is critical to the ongoing growth and development of our industry in California.

The life sciences industry is a quickly evolving industry and requires a broad range of biological and chemical work to be performed in a laboratory environment. This work is very similar to work being conducted in university laboratories. Therefore, clarifying and codifying the L-Occupancy in the 2007 California Building Code for use by any such research and development laboratory will ensure that all such facilities be developed with the same controls and safety provisions.

We believe that the State Fire Marshall acted within the scope of her authority to propose these essential code amendments. The State is well served by the work the State Fire Marshall has done in ensuring that all laboratory facilities throughout the State of California are built to the same safe standards. The codes being proposed are the result of an extensive and inclusive process created by the State Fire Marshall's Office. This was a constructive process that has addressed all the issues and included representatives of industry and regulatory organizations from across the State.

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State Fire Marshall Kate Dargan, Chief Tonya Hoover and their staff should be thanked for their leadership in this important endeavor. Other states with significant industry presences are examining these codes and looking to adopt some of the codes being discussed.

We heartily endorse these Express Terms as they serve to clarify the requirements for any research and development laboratories and enhance the safety measures and controls that will ensure safe operations. We ask that these measures be approved.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey B. Sears /up

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