

March 8, 1965

The Hon. Byron Rumford
Member of the Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Rumford:

I was dumfounded to read a recommendation from the Legislative Analyst to curtail activities of the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health. This is so regressive I can still hardly credit it. Both the Hereditary Defects Unit and the Perinatal Mortality Studies are doing a pioneering job in areas of vital concern to California citizens. There is no reasonable way in which their functions can be taken over by any activity outside the State government. To cut back on them would be an abdication of responsibility of a kind that can only lead in the long run to the negation of the authority of State government and its replacement by Washington. Meanwhile, it is the health of our own young citizens that will bear the penalty. The preventive functions that these units can develop would pay for themselves many times over even by the measure of tax savings. This recommendation is so shortsighted I can hardly believe it was made on an informed basis, nor that it can receive a moment's credit by your committee.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Director, Kennedy Laboratories
for Molecular Medicine

Same letter to:

Willie L. Brown (San Francisco County)
Milton Marks (San Francisco County)
Don Mulford (Alameda County)