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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

April 28, 2008

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate

Dear Senator Inhofe:

Thank you for your letter of April 25, 2008 expressing concern about the public release of our report entitled Chemical Assessments: Low Productivity and New Interagency Review Process Limit the Usefulness and Credibility of EPA's Integrated Risk Information System.

As outlined in our congressional protocols, it is GAO's policy to allow requesters to restrict public distribution up to 30 calendar days after the issuance date. GAO grants extensions beyond the agreed upon release date only in limited cases. Delaying the public release of a report happens infrequently. In this instance, prior to the report's release date of April 7, 2008, Chairman Boxer's deputy staff director, Mr. Erik Olson, asked for an extension of the public release of the report in anticipation of Chairman Boxer's plans to hold a hearing during the month of April.

On April 28, 2008, Ms. Rosa Harris contacted Mr. Matthew Hite to offer a briefing on the report and to ensure that your office had received a copy of our upcoming testimony statement. Mr. Hite assured us that your office had received copies of the GAO report and upcoming testimony statement and expressed appreciation for the immediate response.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (202) 512-4400 or Ms. Rosa Harris, Assistant Director for Congressional Relations, at (202) 512-9492.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph Dawn
Managing Director
Congressional Relations