



Phone: 512-454-0022

Fax: 512-454-0812

7801 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite D-89, Austin, Texas 78752-1038

E-mail: debbyrsa@sbcglobal.net

WebPage: www.RSoA.org

Dear RSA Member,

As you know, the RSA leadership, particularly the Government Affairs and Advocacy Committee, has been monitoring the process of NIH's Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB) and more specifically, the Substance Use, Abuse and Addiction (SUAA) workgroup tasked with considering whether the study of substance use and abuse is being adequately served within the current NIH structure. Our membership has participated in panel discussions, public comment, and written testimony. Many of you watched the video casts and/or accessed the archives.

Recently, Drs. Enoch Gordis and TK Li were asked, as past directors of the NIAAA, to provide testimony to a closed meeting of the committee. Both agreed that once their testimony was distributed within the working committees, it could be distributed to the RSA membership. Thus, attached you will find their testimony, unedited by the RSA.

The SUAA workgroup is acutely aware of the arguments opposing merger and is well-aware of RSA's stated opposition. This process of debate and exchange has "reformulated" the working question which now focuses more on facilitating collaboration rather than "merger" per se. However, this being said, a formal recommendation has not been made; rather, the tenor of the argument has been altered.

Next week Dr. Roper, the Chair of the SUAA, will be meeting with the NIAAA Council in a public meeting on February the 3rd. We will update you following that meeting. In the meantime, I hope that you will join me in thanking Williams and Jensen, as well as the entire GAAC membership, which has never been more relevant. Also, join me in offering a special thanks to Drs. Susan Barron, Michael Charness, Victor Hesselbrock and Peter Monti who have worked both in front and behind the lines to support our efforts over the past months as we have attempted to stay abreast of changing tides, to advocate without aggravating, and to remain committed, not to specific politics, but to the pursuit of science.

There are many others, but I'll save that for San Antonio. See you there!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Debbie Roper', written in a cursive style.