



## Center for Science in the Public Interest Integrity in Science Watch –

### Week of 3/31/2006

The prestigious *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (JACI)* last month failed to disclose two physicians' roles as insurance company defense experts in their scientific review "The Medical Effects of Mold Exposure," which downplayed risks to human health from household mold. According to court documents obtained by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, Dr. Abba I. Terr, Stanford University School of Medicine, and Dr. Andrew Saxon, University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine, were paid up to \$600 an hour for testimony in cases brought by homeowners alleging their illnesses were caused by mold. *JACI*, the journal of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI), requires authors to disclose conflicts of interest to the editor, who then has discretion in publishing them. In a letter to editor Donald Leung, CSPI urged AAAAI to make disclosure mandatory and prevent authors who fail to disclose conflicts of interest from publishing in the journal for three years.

### Week of April 24, 2006

#### Allergy Journal Strengthens Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Policy

The *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (JACI)*, an Elsevier publication, will require greater financial disclosure from authors and automatically publish those disclosures, the editor told the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) in an email communication. CSPI's Integrity in Science Watch previously (March 31st) reported two mold experts, Dr. Abba Terr and Dr. Andrew Saxon, failed to disclose their roles as defense witnesses in mold exposure liability lawsuits when publishing a review that downplayed the risks from household mold exposure. Editor Donald Leung said future author conflict of interest forms accompanying *JACI* submissions will now include "specific questions" about expert witnessing and the journal will "ensure that all published manuscripts will carry a conflict of interest statement regarding each author."

### Week of June 12, 2006

#### Top Allergy Journal Will Publish Contributors' Conflicts of Interest

The nation's leading allergy journal now requires authors to publish their ties to industry whenever their articles appear in that journal. The *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*, the official scientific journal of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, recently adopted new guidelines requiring authors to disclose consultant arrangements, stock or

other equity ownership, patent licensing arrangements, and expert witness testimony. Editor-in-Chief Donald Y.M. Leung initiated the policy change after the Center for Science in the Public Interest uncovered the journal's failure to report that a review on the health risk of mold exposure had been authored by two key defense witnesses in mold liability lawsuits. (See *Integrity in Science Watch*, 3/31 and 4/24)

**Week of 01/16/2007**

### **ACOEM Mold Review Relied on Authors Paid to Testify in Mold Suits**

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine failed to disclose that its position paper on mold, which downplays the risks to human health from the minute fungi, was written by scientists who regularly testify as expert witnesses for defendants in mold lawsuits. According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal* (subscription required), two of the paper's three authors – Bryan Hardin and Bruce Kelman – are paid \$375 to \$500 an hour in their role as principals of the environmental risk management company Veritox Inc., a firm that regularly works for the defense in mold cases. The third author, Andrew Saxon of the University of California at Los Angeles School of Medicine, is paid \$510 to \$720 an hour for consulting and testifying in mold litigation.

Two other medical societies have issued position papers on mold written, in part, by legal defense experts. Last year, Integrity in Science Watch uncovered that the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology's scientific review "The Medical Effects of Mold Exposure" failed to disclose that two physician-authors, including Saxon, were insurance company defense experts. The exposé led the association's journal to strengthen its disclosure requirements.