

From the new book by Dr. Ritchie Shoemaker “Surviving Mold” discussing how I took out the defense in mold litigation, by shedding light on the true science and the fraud of theirs via a Federal GAO Audit. .

The arguments about health effects caused by exposure to the interior environment of water-damaged buildings were brought to the U.S. Senate Health Education Labor and Pension Committee (HELP) in January 2006, largely through the tireless efforts of Sharon Kramer. She’d provided Senator Ted Kennedy’s office with an overwhelming amount of data to show that the current U.S. government approach to mold illness was not only shortsighted and biased, it was plain wrong. Senator Kennedy of HELP and Senator Jeffords of the Senate Public Works Committee called for a legislative staff briefing, with invitations provided to all Senate members. The meeting was held in the Dirksen Building in January 2006. Thank goodness that it wasn’t held in the Rayburn Building; (see Chapter 21, Tourists’ Guide to Moldy Buildings in DC).

Panelists were Vincent Marinkovich, MD; Chin Yang, PhD; David Sherris, MD; and Ritchie Shoemaker, MD, with Mrs. Kramer organizing and moderating the briefing. The EPA, CDC and HHS were supposed to send speakers as well so that an informed dialog could take place for the benefit of the Senate legislative staffers, and therefore the U.S. citizens. The agencies cancelled their appearance at the last minute. I can only imagine how some of the staffers attending must have felt as they were bombarded with words like Type III hypersensitivity, interleukin 13, eosinophils and innate immune responses. That’s why there was a question-and-answer session, but it was getting close to 4:30 and the meeting broke up without much further discussion.

Understanding that (a) most elected officials aren’t comfortable with potential threats to vested financial interests (in the case of water-damaged buildings, those interests involve building ownership and the property and liability insurance industries); and (b) discussion of human health effects due to exposure to water-damaged buildings exposes such threats to those interests, it was curious that such a conference could be held at all. No videos or minutes of the meeting were permitted to be taken so the Senate staffers could feel comfortable to ask questions. I expected that there would be some sort of maneuver surrounding this scientific and political event, so it was no surprise that government agencies, including the EPA, pulled their representatives at the last minute, though no explanation was given.

However, I’m told that super-managers were in attendance. A few Senators showed up; one staffer from Senator Jeffords’ (an Independent from Vermont) office came in late and asked me for materials about the pathophysiology of mold illness. I gave her a color copy of the Biotoxin Pathway, an effort that distilled into one diagram information derived from thousands of hours of research. She asked if there was anything more. Yes, there is, much more.

The upshot of my talk on the reality of human illness from exposure to the interior environment of water-damaged buildings (available as a free download on www.biotoxin.info) was that several Senate staffers, especially Senator Kennedy's, wanted information about illness that could be identified in areas of New Orleans, which had been hard hit with catastrophic damages after flooding from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina just four months before. Specifically, they wanted to know if human illness caused by exposure to water-damaged buildings actually existed. And if so, was it being covered up?

That area of enquiry subsequently led to a request from Senator Kennedy's office in October 2006 to the General Accountability Office for a review of the Federal effort. Again, Sharon Kramer's incredible effort was instrumental in the GAO request that led in turn to the 2008 US GAO report that completely destroyed the defense or government Nay-sayers' credibility in mold illness issues. Thanks to Sharon and Senator Kennedy's staff, the longstanding idiotic arguments about mycotoxins alone being the problem from WDB have now been put to rest, with the exception of some really primitive defense attorneys who don't know that the old ACOEM-quoting defense and the old AAAAI-quoting defense are a prescription for a loss in court.