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June 22, 1994

NIOSH Docket Office
Robert A. Taft Laboratories
Mail Stop C34
4676 Columbia Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Dear NIOSH Officials:

The West Virginia Hospital Association is encouraged by the proposed rule that would change current procedures for testing and certifying air purifying respirators to be used in the TB Control Program. The recognition of a new generation of respirators called "Class C" respirators will be welcomed by the health care industry because this type respirator will be potentially less cumbersome for the employee and less costly to the institution.

We are in very strong support of this proposed new rule on respiratory protective devices as an important first step in improving the certification process for these devices as protection against TB and other biological hazards in the health care setting. There is a definite need for a certification process that addresses the CDC's performance criteria for respiratory protection against TB that is both acceptable and practical for most health care workers' needs. It is important that you proceed expeditiously in implementing these new testing and certification procedures to open up the market for more practical and economical respiratory protection for health care workers against TB.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Syron, CPHQ, FACHE
Vice President for Professional Activities

EPS/pdp

JUN 27 1994