

# A F S C M E

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

## LOCAL 3299

August 1, 2007

**Main Office / UC Berkeley**  
2201 Broadway Avenue,  
Suite 315  
Oakland, CA 94612  
Ph: 510.844.1160  
Fax: 510.844.1170

**UC Davis Office**  
1900 28th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95816  
Ph: 916.457.7332  
Fax: 916.457.7211

**UC Irvine Office**  
1918 West Chapman Ave.,  
Suite 205  
Orange, CA 92868  
Ph: 714.634.1449  
Fax: 714.634.0705

**UC Los Angeles Office**  
1085 Gayley Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
Ph: 310.824.0019  
Fax: 310.824.0480

**UC Riverside Office**  
1168 East La Cadena Drive #201  
Riverside, CA 92501  
Ph: 951.781.8158  
Fax: 951.781.7034

**UC San Diego Office**  
2561 First Avenue,  
Suite C  
San Diego, CA 92103  
Ph: 619.296.0342  
Fax: 619.702.8311

**UC San Francisco Office**  
1360 9th Ave., #240  
San Francisco, CA 94122  
Ph: 415.566.6477  
Fax: 415.566.6846

**UC Santa Barbara Office**  
956 Embarcadero Del Norte #4  
Goleta, CA 93117  
Ph: 805.685.3760  
Fax: 805.685.3270

**UC Santa Cruz Office**  
201 Maple Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Ph: 831.425.4822  
Fax: 831.316.0049

President Robert Dynes  
University of California  
1111 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear President Dynes:

We are writing to express our outrage with the decision of the University of California to contract with the corporation Hill and Knowlton for public relation services. We are taken aback that the University would pay to accept recommendations and services from a corporation with the historical track record of representing some of the worst entities in the world.

Hill and Knowlton have been involved in extremely significant public relations campaigns in which the firm's clients have provided false information to the public and the government on such important matters as the dangers of smoking and the exposure to lead. For instance, it was Hill and Knowlton that the tobacco industry contracted with in the early 1950's to help form their defense of strategic public delay against emerging medical science that proved the health dangers of smoking. It was this immoral and deadly public relations strategy that led to creation of the Tobacco Institute and decades of misinformation to the public that would cause the unnecessary deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

In 1981, as reported in the widely acclaimed book "Trust Us Were Experts", Hill and Knowlton once again represented those interested in disinformation at the cost of public health by attacking research, published by Dr. Herbert Needleman, demonstrating that children with lead-exposure were more likely to be hyperactive and suffer from attention deficit. Even after the Environmental Protection Agency adopted Dr. Needleman's research findings, Hill and Knowlton circulated misinformation on those findings to attempt to sway public opinion against the EPA and Dr. Needleman. Twenty years later, Dr. Needleman is recognized by those in public health and medicine as playing a key role in ensuring the adoption of environmental health protections that led to a five fold decrease in childhood lead poisoning in children by the early 1990s.

Unfortunately, Hill and Knowlton have not limited their services and strategic tactics to those in the area of health. They have represented some of the worst human rights abusing states in the world and received the Center for Public Integrity's number one ranking on their 1992 list, entitled "The Torturers Lobby". This listing reflected the fact that the firm received more than \$14 million in one year for public relations services provided to such states. Hill and Knowlton also holds the distinction of serving as the public relations firm for Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) after that firm was indicted by a

Letter to President Dynes

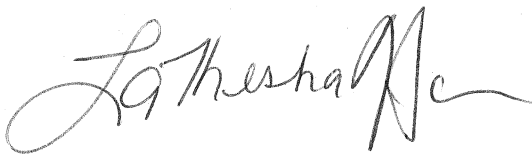
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federal grand jury in 1988 for conspiring with the Medellin Cartel to launder \$32,000,000 in illegal drug trafficking profits. Hill and Knowlton's efforts on behalf of BCCI lead to a report by United States Senators John Kerry and Hank Brown to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which concluded that Hill and Knowlton partners new of BCCI's reputation as a "sleazy" bank when it accepted the Bank as a client right after the federal indictments.

We find it unacceptable that the University of California, with its five public medical centers and teaching hospitals, would decide to have this great public institution associated with those that have worked for years to represent clients that misinformed the public about serious health risks. We call upon you to immediately sever all contracts for services with Hill and Knowlton and to issue a public apology to the people of California.

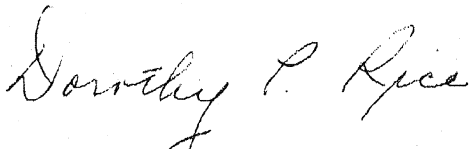
Sincerely,



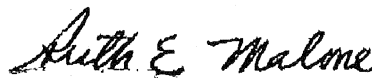
LAKESHA HARRISON  
President  
American Federation of  
State, County &  
Municipal Employees  
Local 3299



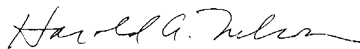
Geraldine Jenkins  
Council of Presidents, President-Elect  
California Nurses Association



Dorothy P. Rice, D.Sc. (Hon)  
Professor Emerita  
University of California, San Francisco



Ruth Malone  
RN, PhD, FAAN  
Professor & Vice Chair  
Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences  
School of Nursing  
University of California, San Francisco



Harold A. Nelson  
Torture Abolition and Survivors  
Coalition International

Denise Adams-Sims, MPH  
Executive Director  
California Black Health Network

Cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Senator Diane Feinstein  
Senator Barbara Boxer  
Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi  
President Pro Tem of the State Senate Don Perata

Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez

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State Senator Sheila Kuehl, Chair, Senate Health Committee

State Senator Jack Scott, Chair, Senate Education Committee

State Senator Leland Yee

Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally, Chair, Assembly Health Committee

Assemblyman Anthony Portantino, Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee

Congresswoman Barbara Lee