Message

From: Partridge, Charles [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=27DA56DA9A12472787EF56077099CF36-PARTRIDGE, CHARLES]
Sent: 12/6/2019 10:48:45 PM
To: Mutter, Andrew [mutter.andrew@epa.gov]
CC: Sopkin, Gregory [sopkin.gregory@epa.gov]; Wall, Dan [wall.dan@epa.gov]; Smidinger, Betsy [Smidinger.Betsy@epa.gov]; Thomas, Deb [thomas.debrah@epa.gov]; Urdiales, Aaron [Urdiales.Aaron@epa.gov]; Vranka, Joe [vranka.joe@epa.gov]; Mylott, Richard [Mylott.Richard@epa.gov]; Wardell, Christopher [Wardell.Christopher@epa.gov]; Spence, Sandra [Spence.Sandra@epa.gov]; Barnicoat, Dana [Barnicoat.Dana@epa.gov]; Greene, Nikia [Greene.Nikia@epa.gov]; Elsen, Henry [Elsen.Henry@epa.gov]; Sethuraman, Jag [Sethuraman.Jag@epa.gov]
Subject: Re: FINAL - Media Query regarding the Butte Health Study (Meconium) - Butte Weekly (Deadline COB today)

Looks good

Cp

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 6, 2019, at 3:48 PM, Mutter, Andrew <mutter.andrew@epa.gov> wrote:

Slight modification based on Dan's recommendation:

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Best regards,

Andrew

Andrew Mutter

Director, Public Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8 (Denver, CO)

Office: 303.312.6448
Cell: 720.520.3047

Twitter: @EPARegion8
Facebook: U.S. EPA Region 8
Webpage: EPA Region 8 (Mountains and Plains)

From: Sopkin, Gregory <sopkin.gregory@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 3:44 PM
To: Wall, Dan <wall.dan@epa.gov>
Cc: Mutter, Andrew <mutter.andrew@epa.gov>; Smidinger, Betsy <Smidinger.Betsy@epa.gov>; Thomas, Deb <thomas.debrah@epa.gov>; Urdiales, Aaron <Urdiales.Aaron@epa.gov>; Partridge, Charles <Partridge.Charles@epa.gov>; Vranka, Joe <vranka.joe@epa.gov>; Mylott, Richard <Mylott.Richard@epa.gov>; Wardell, Christopher <Wardell.Christopher@epa.gov>; Spence, Sandra <Spence.Sandra@epa.gov>; Barnicoat, Dana <Barnicoat.Dana@epa.gov>; Greene, Nikia <Greene.Nikia@epa.gov>; Elsen, Henry <Elsen.Henry@epa.gov>; Sethuraman, Jag <Sethuraman.Jag@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: FINAL - Media Query regarding the Butte Health Study (Meconium) - Butte Weekly (Deadline COB today)

Ok, we can keep if and when. Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 6, 2019, at 3:33 PM, Wall, Dan <wall.dan@epa.gov> wrote:

Greg
We just received an email from Dr Hailer suggesting the samples may not be useable. I recognize this phrase could be interpreted as accusatory and would have no concerns if we edited it. However, I also don't want to raise expectations that we will definitely be able to obtain and use the samples.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 6, 2019, at 3:27 PM, Sopkin, Gregory <sopkin.gregory@epa.gov> wrote:

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 6, 2019, at 2:55 PM, Mutter, Andrew <mutter.andrew@epa.gov> wrote:

Thanks everyone. I've updated the response to incorporate Deb and Betsy edits. Also, we have a significant change to A2, so please take another look at that one again.

I will send to Matt at 4 pm today, so if you have updates send ASAP.

Q1) I felt that Dr. Hailer kind of put you on the spot in the meeting when she mentioned she'd already showed you her meconium data back in March 2019 and asked you to clarify what your change in response was to the same data now that it's in her report and now that it's published. Can you give me an official statement as your answer to that question, and would you care to clarify for the record the details of that March 2019 meeting?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q2) More relevant, now that the data is published with references, and has appeared on the front page of the daily newspaper, causing quite a stir, what is your detailed plan for next steps and a timeframe to complete it? E.G. In your estimation, how long will it take for EPA to conclude from Hailer/McDermott's raw data and additional samples whether we have an issue that needs further attention?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q3) Relative to what you said at the Board of Health meeting about running remaining samples "blind" at an EPA, CDC or independent laboratory, which Katie confirmed there were remaining meconium samples; and her offer to go through in excruciating detail her methods, raw data, etc. -- Have you confirmed that she will send you her (and McDermott's) leftover splits and have you received or officially requested the study's raw data?

A3) See above.

Q4) Hailer made a very confident statement that she/McDermott had looked through all of their methods, data, etc. and ultimately concluded "No: we didn't make any mistakes." You made a number of statements that clearly indicated a need for EPA to "confirm", "looking at the study further" "delving into the data much deeper" and even went so far as saying "if the Butte data holds up" "if these (data) turnout." What are the main things you are looking at in the data and what do you make of Hailer's comment that there were no mistakes made?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q5) Hailer and McDermott say in their study's published conclusion that their approach "provided

straightforward evidence of elevated exposure to metals in a mining exposed community. The approach was inexpensive, thorough and required no advanced statistical analysis." Further they used the term "potential public health emergency." What is your reaction and assessment to these conclusions.

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q6) Please explain your experience in toxicology and with EPA and in that experience, what is your assessment/comparison of this particular "pilot" "proof of concept" study and how it is being amplified versus any other examples you've worked with or are aware of?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q7) You mentioned a study from Canada as the "gold standard" of meconium studies, which used >2,000 samples and as relevant study you are looking to for appropriate comparisons. Can you please send that to me and perhaps give me a reason why you hold it in higher regard to the other studies referenced in Hailer's study and in her presentation/comparisons?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

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Q8) Do you know anything about the NIH grant proposal Hailer/McDermott submitted and why it was unsuccessful?

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Q9) Please feel free to add anything else, any other statements that you would like me to include in the story. Again, don't hesitate to call or email me if you have additional questions. Thanks again!

A9) Nothing additional at this time.

Best regards,

Andrew

Andrew Mutter

Director, Public Affairs
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(Denver, CO)

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From: Smidinger, Betsy <Smidinger.Betsy@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 1:49 PM

To: Mutter, Andrew <mutter.andrew@epa.gov>; Sopkin, Gregory <sopkin.gregory@epa.gov>; Thomas, Deb <thomas.debrah@epa.gov>; Urdiales, Aaron <Urdiales.Aaron@epa.gov>
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Subject: RE: Media Query regarding the Butte Health Study (Meconium) - Butte Weekly (Deadline COB today)

Andrew – Please see my edits/comments {which are in the brackets} in red below.

From: Mutter, Andrew <mutter.andrew@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 6, 2019 12:36 PM
To: Sopkin, Gregory <sopkin.gregory@epa.gov>; Thomas, Deb <thomas.debrah@epa.gov>; Smidinger, Betsy <Smidinger.Betsy@epa.gov>; Urdiales, Aaron <Urdiales.Aaron@epa.gov>
Cc: Partridge, Charles <Partridge.Charles@epa.gov>; Vranka, Joe <vranka.joe@epa.gov>; Mylott, Richard <Mylott.Richard@epa.gov>; Wardell, Christopher <Wardell.Christopher@epa.gov>; Spence, Sandra <Spence.Sandra@epa.gov>; Barnicoat, Dana <Barnicoat.Dana@epa.gov>; Greene, Nikia <Greene.Nikia@epa.gov>; Elsen, Henry <Elsen.Henry@epa.gov>; Sethuraman, Jag <Sethuraman.Jag@epa.gov>; Barnicoat, Dana <Barnicoat.Dana@epa.gov>; Wall, Dan <wall.dan@epa.gov>
Subject: Media Query regarding the Butte Health Study (Meconium) - Butte Weekly (Deadline COB today)

Greg, Deb, Betsy, and Aaron,
We received the below media query (nine questions) from the Butte Weekly newspaper (Mr. Matt Vincent). The team prepared and proposes the below responses.

Pls review and comment.

Thx

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Best regards,

Andrew

Andrew Mutter

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