

Letter to Kenneth John Ryan, M.D., Chairman of the Commission on Research Integrity

from Ralph A. Bradshaw, PhD, President of FASEB

September 13, 1995

Kenneth John Ryan, M.D.
Chairman
Commission on Research Integrity
5515 Security Lane, Suite 700
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Dr. Ryan:

Many thanks for sending us a copy of the Recommendations from the Belmont Meeting of the Commission on Research Integrity which includes the final definition of Research Misconduct.

The report and especially the definition of Research Misconduct have been examined by both the Public Affairs Advisory Committee and the Public Affairs Executive Committee as well as members of the Board of Directors of the Federation of American Society for Experimental Biology (FASEB).

We find the newly proposed definition totally unsatisfactory. It is our view that the defects are so serious and numerous that remedies to accommodate our concerns can be accomplished only by a complete redraft of the definition. It is overly broad, vague, and unclear. Moreover, the definition and accompanying material reflect a lack of understanding of the process of basic scientific research and the operation and attitudes of scientists attempting to understand complex biological phenomena. Not only is the proposed definition unacceptable, but we feel that attempts to implement it will prove to be unworkable and a source of unending, unproductive conflict.

We hope that you will communicate our views to your colleagues on the Commission along with our recommendation that you adopt as a definition the version formulated by the Panel organized by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the Institute of Medicine. That definition which was carefully crafted after almost two years of intensive study of responsible conduct in research, is:

"Misconduct in Science is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reporting research. Misconduct in science does not include errors of judgment,

errors in the recording, selection, or analysis of data; differences in opinions involving the interpretation of data; or, misconduct unrelated to the research process."

On behalf of the 45,000 members of FASEB consisting of 10 Societies I urge you and your colleagues on the Commission on Research Integrity to discard the proposed definition and replace it with one such as that included in this letter.

Sincerely,

[Signed]

Ralph A. Bradshaw, PhD

President

See also:

[Report of the Commission on Research Integrity](#) [Complete text of the Ryan Commission Report, 200 K]

Other FASEB statements on Research Integrity:

[Letter from Dr. Silverstein to Dr. Ryan, March 1995](#)

[Testimony of Dr. Stossel to Commission on Research Integrity, April 1995](#)

[Statement by Dr. Silverstein, Nov. 1994](#)

[FASEB Home Page](#) | [FASEB Public Policy Research](#) | [FASEB Societies](#)

[Biologists Discover AMAZING Things](#) | [Comments](#) |