



## THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

AUG - 4 2015

Deborah L. Swackhamer, Ph.D.  
Chairwoman  
Board of Scientific Counselors  
Science Advisory Board  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Swackhamer:

I want to thank the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board and the Board of Scientific Counselors for their joint review of the Office of Research and Development's strategic-research action plans for 2016-19 and its roadmaps on cross-cutting research issues. The EPA's research programs help build the scientific foundation upon which the EPA and others rely for making decisions that protect public health and the environment.

This joint report provides valuable insight and very thoughtful recommendations that will strengthen our research plans and approaches for federal-agency collaborations. I am especially pleased that ORD received this report early in the development process so that the contributions from your committees can be carefully considered as ORD works with EPA colleagues and stakeholders to determine research priorities for 2016-19.

I appreciate the boards' recognition of the difficult budget climate during the past few years. These uncertainties have a particular impact on our research enterprise that requires advance planning to carry out multi-year research. ORD has been leading the way to ensure that the EPA is not only thinking about the scientific and technical information needed for imminent decisions but also anticipating the decisions and issues of the next decade. To develop the scientific foundation to address the environmental challenges ahead of us, the EPA must plan and embark on that research now.

As your report emphasized, implementation is as important as research planning. ORD is focusing on a number of issues that you raised, including research integration on cross-cutting issues, work-force planning and communication. We have made a substantial commitment to convene the BOSC during the next several years to advise ORD as they implement these plans and roadmaps.

I have enclosed a detailed response to each recommendation in the joint report so that members of both boards can see how ORD is considering your guidance.

Please accept my sincere gratitude for the boards' dedication to improving our research enterprise. Your advice is vital to the EPA as we pursue advances in science and technology that protect human health and the environment.

Sincerely,



Gina McCarthy

Enclosure



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Peter S. Thorne, Ph.D.  
Chairman  
Science Advisory Board  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Thorne:

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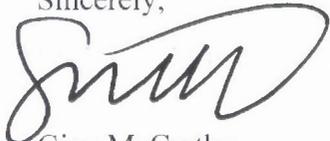
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