DES Action USA
P.O. Box 7296
Jupiter, FL 33468 www.desaction.org
(800) 337-9288; info@desaction.org
Empowering the DES-exposed community since 1978

November 3, 2014

Representative Louise Slaughter
2469 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Slaughter,

We were pleased to see your comments in the 11/2/2014 Rochester Democrat and Chronicle referring to your early years in Congress fighting to protect those exposed to the anti-miscarriage drug, diethylstilbestrol (DES). You mentioned it as a hard lesson learned about the workings of the Food and Drug Administration. Speaking for the millions exposed to DES, we are extremely grateful for all you did.

However, we come to you now asking for your reconsideration of support for FDA approval of a drug to treat female sexual dysfunction. In your letter of 1/27/14 your concern was that there are drugs approved to treat it in men, but not in women, with this gender disparity needing to be addressed.

In our view, and the view of other respected organizations such as the National Women's Health Network, the gender equity argument doesn't apply in this case. Unlike for male sexual dysfunction the condition in women is not yet well understood and its causes are more complicated. While sexual dysfunction can be safely and effectively treated in males, the current drug proposed for women is just barely better than a placebo and serious concerns about its safety can be raised. Please see the letter we submitted to the FDA for a full explanation. There is no point rushing to approve a drug that could end in tragedy.

You are recognized as a strong advocate for women's health so we hope you review your position regarding a drug for female sexual dysfunction. Please request the FDA approve such an intervention ONLY on the basis of safety and effectiveness. As we told the FDA, "no one should be in a rush to 'fix' women's bodies via drugs. DES Daughters are living proof that good intentions and poor research lead to disaster, postentially for generations to come." Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Frances K. Howell
Executive Director