

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear here today to discuss the activities of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with respect to anti-obesity drugs.

Previous actions by both the FDA and DEA have had an important impact on the availability, labeling, and use of these drugs. In spite of this, abuse of amphetamines in particular, appears to be a continuing problem in our society. It is appropriate that additional action in regard to amphetamines be considered at this time.

The story I will emphasize in this testimony is that the available data, while preliminary and incomplete, indicate that the amphetamines remain, among the anorectic drugs, the major offenders as drugs of abuse. This problem cannot be solved by invoking additional controls under the Controlled Substances Act since these drugs are already in Schedule II, the most tightly controlled category for marketed drugs. The only meaningful next step which can be taken is to remove the indication for obesity from the labeling for amphetamines or to remove them from the market. FDA is working with DEA and NIDA, the Federal agencies with detailed information regarding drug abuse, to develop the necessary documentation for such a position. Abuse of amphetamines continues to occur, with deleterious and often devastating effects on the individual who abuses or becomes dependent upon them. We must move ahead vigorously in addressing this important problem in drug safety.