



A CENTURY OF CARING 1889-1989

Tompkins Community Hospital

July 22, 1994

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NIOSH Docket Office
Robert A. Taft Laboratories
Mail Stop c34
4676 Columbia Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45226

To Whom It May Concern:

As a nursing executive for a 200+ bed general acute care community hospital in the State of New York, I would like to take this opportunity to commend NIOSH for its proposed rule that would change the current procedures for testing and certifying air purifying respirators. We who deal with caring for patients with mycobacterium tuberculosis on a daily basis applaud the possibility of providing that care utilizing a sensible, cost effective and more comfortable respirator which will, at the same time, keep our staff safe. We have long felt that the current OSHA standards need to be updated.

At the present time we are about to commence a fit test program with our employees, utilizing the OSHA required HEPA filtered respirators and powered HEPA filtered respirators. The anticipated costs of this program weighed against the proven benefits are discouraging, and possibly unnecessary, particularly at a time when we can't afford to waste our precious financial resources. I fear that compliance with these respirators which are hot and suffocating when worn for normally long periods for patient care, will be compromised. I strongly endorse the adoption of the proposed NIOSH rule for testing and certifying respirators so that manufacturers can get on with providing us with a safe and effective respirator before many more thousands of dollars are wasted.

Respectfully,

Susan Hassett, RN
Vice President

JUL 27 1994