

# Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition

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October 26, 1992

Mr. Andrew Procassini  
President  
Semiconductor Industry Association  
4300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 271  
San Jose, Ca 95129

Dear Mr. Procassini:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Campaign for Responsible Technology and the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition to begin a dialogue regarding two critical issues facing the semiconductor industry:

**\*\* the implementation of Congress's recent mandate for SEMATECH to conduct pollution prevention research;**

**\*\* the semiconductor industry's response to the recent disclosure that one-third of the pregnant women exposed to glycol ethers at 2 IBM semiconductor plants suffered miscarriages.**

## SEMATECH and Pollution Prevention

As you know, Congress recently passed the SEMATECH reauthorization for \$100 million, with the proviso that "\$10 million of the funds authorized for SEMATECH should be utilized for development of pollution-preventing, environmentally safe microchip manufacturing process." Congress further mandated that "In executing this mandate, SEMATECH is expected to consult appropriate environmental and labor organizations."

We believe that this new mission for SEMATECH can have a significant beneficial impact on improving the safety of the manufacturing process as well as improving the relations among the semiconductor industry and its neighbors and workers. We are currently seeking to work with SEMATECH to implement this mandate of Congress.

We would also like to meet with you and other SIA representatives to discuss industry matching funds for the government's \$10 million earmark. We believe that for industry to earmark \$10 million of its \$100 million contribution for pollution prevention would not only be consistent with the historical 50 - 50 relationship between public and private funding, it would also go a long way towards establishing a good faith commitment to supporting this important effort to protect the environment.

## The Response to IBM's Miscarriage Study

We believe that it is essential that SIA member companies take an aggressive, proactive approach to help solve the problems indicated by the disturbing news that one-third of the women who became pregnant while working with glycol ethers at 2 IBM plants suffered miscarriages. We believe that this is wholly unacceptable and further believe that the appropriate and responsible action called for is the prompt phase out of glycol ethers in the work place. We call on you to provide leadership and work with the SIA members to seek phase out goals and timetables for the glycol ethers, similar to the largely successful efforts to phase out CFCs.

SIA has known about the hazards of glycol ethers since at least 1982, when your predecessor circulated a memo to semiconductor executives detailing the research on reproductive toxicity (memo dated May 11, 1982 enclosed). We have prepared a timeline that documents more than 10 years of knowledge of the hazards and some of our efforts to promote the phase out of these chemicals (enclosed). We believe that the time for further studies and talk is behind us and that SIA members must act now to implement safer alternatives -- several of which are now available.

We look forward to commencing a dialogue with you and other semiconductor officials to seek solutions to these important issues. We welcome recent indications that the semiconductor industry is addressing the challenges of change, particularly in the changing relationships with government. But we also believe that these changing relationships must also embrace a new approach to working with community groups that have historically been perceived as hostile to the industry's needs.

We want the semiconductor industry to succeed and thrive, but we also want the entire community to benefit. Too often, the real beneficiaries have represented too narrow a spectrum. We believe that the recent breakthrough with SEMATECH allows an opportunity to open a new dialogue. In fact, we believe that for the new relationship between the industry and government to be successful, there must also be a constructive dialogue between the industry and the affected communities. We suggest that the Semiconductor Industry Conference "The Challenge of Change" later this week would provide a good initial forum for discussing these issues, and ask that you invite a group of us to meet with you and other industry representatives in conjunction with the conference for this purpose.

I will call you in the near future to begin the discussion outlined above.

Sincerely,

Ted Smith

