



**News Reports About FDA Advisor Raise New Questions  
About Agency's Refusal to Approve Over-the-Counter Plan B**

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WASHINGTON, DC – Since President Bush first nominated David Hager to the Food and Drug Administration's Reproductive Health Drugs Advisory Committee, the Reproductive Health Technologies Project has voiced concerns that his views about birth control place him squarely outside the mainstream of medicine and make him an inappropriate government adviser.

Dr. Hager has reportedly misused his role as a physician to impose his own particular religious agenda on his women patients instead of being guided by respect for their personal beliefs and reproductive health priorities. Unfortunately, his appointment to a critical FDA panel puts him in an influential position to impose this disrespectful agenda on all American women.

We are especially troubled by reports that Dr. Hager was asked to author an unprecedented minority opinion opposing FDA approval of the emergency contraceptive Plan B for over-the-counter use – *after* the joint advisory committee on Reproductive Health Drugs and Non-Prescription Drugs voted overwhelmingly to support the application. Even more disturbing, Dr. Hager has boasted that this minority opinion was shared with the FDA Commissioner, further underscoring our concerns that the agency's deliberations on non-prescription access to Plan B have been inappropriately politicized.

We call on the current Acting FDA Commissioner Lester Crawford to release Dr. Hager's minority opinion into the public record and explain what role it played in the FDA's refusal to allow American women access to a safe, effective back-up birth control method without a prescription. Medical experts agree that Plan B meets all the criteria for an over-the-counter product, and research shows that requiring a prescription is a known barrier to emergency contraception for some women.

Plan B gives women a much-needed second chance to prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex or birth control failure. But for emergency contraception to work, women must be able to get it in time. We urge the FDA to move swiftly to make Plan B available without a prescription. American women have waited far too long for ready access to this common sense, common ground solution to preventing unintended pregnancy and reducing the need for abortion.