



October 17, 2016

Dr. John Howard, MD  
Director  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
Patriots Plaza 1  
395 E Street, SW, #9200  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Howard:

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) would like to offer support for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) grant proposal focusing on engineering noise controls. Title of the proposal is "Developing, Evaluating and Promoting Engineering Noise Control Strategies; contact for the proposal is Lt. Bryan Beamer, PhD, PE, CSP of NIOSH; (513) 533-8308, zmy4@cdc.gov.

AIHA has long been an ardent advocate of greater reliance on engineering control solutions for noise exposure in industry. AIHA recognizes the need to protect workers from noise exposures through engineering solutions because:

- Hearing loss is the third most common U.S. chronic health condition after hypertension and arthritis, and occupational hearing loss is the most common work-related illness. Over 11% of the U.S. working population has hearing difficulty and about 8% of workers have tinnitus
- 24% of hearing difficulty among U.S. workers is attributable to occupational exposures
- Limited evidence exists that demonstrates the effectiveness of interventions to promote the wearing of hearing protection
- Improper and inconsistent use of hearing protection coupled with inadequate training are causative factors for the lack of effectiveness to prevent noise induced hearing loss

The approach of the proposal to protect workers' hearing by promoting noise control engineering strategies in the manufacturing, service and construction industries is one that is likely to have lasting impact. Results focused on practical remedies and best practices will be of particular use to AIHA members. Know that AIHA is open to potential collaboration on this project by:

- Identifying sites/tasks where noise is likely to produce worker injury and illness
- Providing feedback on the feasibility of noise control engineering interventions
- Helping develop and document case studies in the noise control engineering process
- Assisting in evaluating solutions in the field
- Disseminating noise control solutions to the occupational health community

AIHA believes the establishment of an easily accessible broad database of specific high noise exposure situations and engineering control solutions across many industries would be a welcomed development.

This NIOSH project will prove very useful in translating knowledge that employers can use to reduce occupational hearing loss and we welcome this new opportunity for AIHA and NIOSH to align missions on protecting worker health.

Sincerely,



Steven E. Lacey, PhD, CIH, CSP  
President

cc: Frank Hearl, NIOSH Chief of Staff  
Lt. Bryan Beamer, NIOSH  
AIHA Board of Directors  
AIHA Noise Committee, Chair  
Larry Sloan, AIHA Executive Director