Honorable J. Allen Frear, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Frear:

Thank you for forwarding the copy of Miss Georgia H. Riley's letter to you, concerning my remarks on the handling of the Polio Vaccine Program.

As you know, I am a member of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, and have now listened to many hours of testimony concerning the federal government's handling of this extremely confused situation.

My two major concerns have been with the apparent delays in establishing a program of federal and state assistance which would assure that all children will receive the vaccine regardless of the economic condition of their family and that in this program there will be no means test which would tend to embarrass children in the lower economic groups. I have also been extremely concerned with the fact that the U. S. Public Health Service did not institute rigid testing procedures to govern the production of the vaccine prior to the public announcement of the success of the vaccine research.

In my opinion, it was inexcusable that several thousand units of the vaccine were put on the open market in the early days of the program with no attempt to control or to allocate the vaccine to the children in the more susceptible age groups.

At the present time the Senate Labor Committee has before it a bill which would provide the President with standby controls over the distribution and production of the vaccine in the event that he should deem such controls necessary. In addition, it is proposed that any state which adopts a program for the allocation and distribution of the vaccine to all its school children will receive grants from the federal government for the purchase of the necessary units of vaccine to cover those children coming within the state program.
I am sure you will agree with me that the present delays and confusion over the safety and the distribution of the vaccine have been extremely unfortunate. I am convinced that this could have been avoided in large part if the Department of Health, Education and Welfare had undertaken a study of this subject last fall and had proceeded to outline a logical plan prior to the announcement of the success of the Salk vaccine.

Very sincerely yours,