July 20, 2005

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
2332 Senate Dirksen Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

The American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) supports DoD Amendment #3225 that will require manufacturers who sell dietary supplements containing stimulants on military installations to report to FDA serious adverse event reports relating to the products.

ASPET appreciates your leadership on these important scientific issues that impact public health. Many U.S. consumers mistakenly believe that herbal products and dietary supplements are regulated by the FDA and scientifically proven to be safe and effective. The unregulated use of dietary supplements provides an additional risk magnified by the lack of analytical oversight and control in manufacturing practices. Sound pharmacological studies are needed to help determine the potential for interactions among herbal products, dietary supplements, and prescription drugs as well as chronic disease processes.

ASPET believes that this important amendment will help to explicitly raise important and overlooked public health concerns facing members of the armed services that come from the unregulated use of products whose efficacy may be unproven and whose manufacturing standards are unregulated. ASPET hopes that Congress will address these public health issues through reexamination of the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act.

ASPET is a 4,700 member scientific society whose members conduct basic and clinical pharmacological research in academia, industry and the government. Our member’s research efforts help develop new medicines and therapeutic agents to fight old, new, and re-emerging diseases.

We look forward to working with you in support of these efforts.

Sincerely,

James E. Barrett
President