

# NEWS RELEASE

## THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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# Good Riddance, Dr. Kessler

## *FDA chief is 'public health threat,' Libertarians say*

WASHINGTON, DC — American families will be safer and healthier now that the reign of FDA Commissioner David Kessler is ending, says Libertarian Party Chairman Steve Dasbach.

"Dr. David Kessler spent six years making a mockery of the Hippocratic oath: first do no harm," Dasbach said.

"Under his regime, cancer patients died while waiting for the FDA to approve life-saving drugs. Manufacturers of medical devices were driven out of business by FDA bureaucrats, costing countless Americans their jobs. And his attempts to crack down on smoking were offensive to Americans who don't want government officials trying to micromanage their lives."

Kessler announced on Tuesday he would leave his post early next year. During his six years on the job, Kessler waged well-publicized campaigns against . . .

■ **Orange juice.** FDA agents raided a Procter & Gamble orange juice factory in 1991 and seized 40,000 gallons which were labeled as "fresh" but contained concentrate. No one suggested the juice was unsafe; Kessler merely objected to the adjective "fresh" on the label.

■ **Cancer patients.** According to *The New York Times*, cancer doctors were forced to wait as long as five years for the FDA to approve new life-saving treatments. "I've had patients die waiting for drugs," said Dr. Cary Presant, chairman of the Los Angeles Oncologic Institute.

■ **AIDS sufferers.** Kessler was frequently criticized by AIDS activists for delaying approval of potentially life-extending drugs. "Who knows how many AIDS victims are dead today because of Dr. Kessler's foot-dragging?" Dasbach asked.

■ **Vitamin supplements.** In 1993, Kessler attempted to have vitamins and nutritional supplements classified as "food supplements" so the FDA could regulate, restrict, or ban them. "Apparently, Kessler was worried that Americans would have easy access to health-enhancing vitamins," said Dasbach. "Fortunately, public outcry forced him to back down on that issue."

■ **Jobs.** A 1993 Congressional report said 49 American-made medical devices — bogged down in FDA review — had already been approved in Europe and Japan. The report said: "Many small companies [in] the industry may be driven out of business by regulatory delays."

"Kessler's resignation is good news because American families will be safe from the public health threat posed by one power-hungry, overzealous bureaucrat," Dasbach said. "David Kessler is a one-man regulation delivery system who has cost many Americans their jobs, their freedom, and even their lives."

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