The ACS Committee on Chemical Safety

March 19, 2014

Oral Report Presentation by Robert Hill, Chair

Dallas, TX

**Mister President, Councilors, and Members:**

In our continuing effort to assist our academic colleagues in their safety efforts, the Committee on Chemical Safety (CCS) is forming the Task Force on Safety Education Guidelines. It is our belief that a recurring root cause of many incidents that happen in our laboratories is the result of an inadequate safety education. The goal of this task force is to provide guidance for the safety topics and areas that should be taught to secondary, undergraduate, and graduate students, and the competencies that should attained at various levels of chemistry education. We solicit your ideas and suggestions for this project.

On Monday March17th, CCS published its first ever Safety Alert concerning the Rainbow Demonstration in *Chemical and Engineering News.* You should have found a copy of this alert on your chair. The use of this demonstration has continued to seriously injure students from flash fires in separate incidents over many years extending back to at least 2002. Just before the most recent serious incident in January, the U.S. Chemical Safety Board released a video relating the personal story of a student who suffered serious injuries from just such a demonstration – you will find the link for this video in the online version of the *Chemical and Engineering News* comment. Performing this demonstration with flammable solvents on open benches presents an unacceptable risk of fire and injuries to students and teachers. We ask that the use of this demonstration should be discontinued. We provide alternative methods on the CCS website.

CCS needs your help in getting a message to high school science and university teachers to prevent further injuries from this Rainbow demonstration. We alone simply cannot reach our nation’s science teachers without your help. We are asking you to pass on this message to your own local science and university teachers to stop using this demonstration. If you can help us spread the word, we may be able to prevent future injuries from this demonstration. We are also reaching out to newly created American Association of Chemistry Teachers (AACT).

I thank you for your attention and remind you that CCS seeks your ideas, suggestions, and feedback to make chemistry safer.

**Mister President, this concludes my report.**