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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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December 22, 1981

William Shonick, Ph.D.
Professor and Head
Division of Health Services
School of Public Health
University of California
Los Angeles, CA. 90024

Dear Professor Shonick:

I have returned from extensive travels to find your letter of request for the advancement of Lester Breslow. I am very interested in your policy of formal review and advancement of people already at the height of their careers. It is an excellent system, and I should be grateful if you would send me the University of California policy so that I might discuss it with my University.

With respect to Lester Breslow and his contributions to the public health, I can assure you he is regarded as among the top half dozen figures in this country. The richness of his background in academic and agency work has helped to make him credible to all shades of groups within the preventive medicine, public health, and scientific communities. His solid contributions both to research and to program have contributed to this along with his seasoned judgment and political effectiveness. Together they have brought him to the highest level of leadership in the profession.

His recognition, by appointments and elected offices, his sought-after consultation among the bodies of Congress and the scientific community, and the steady series of high honors awarded him, indicate the level of competence and standing in which he is held.

His teaching strengths, as well as can be observed by an outsider, have to do with clarity of thought and expression in public communication. His scholarly and creative contributions at this stage of his career have more to do with the synthesis, vision, and direction he provides to the larger community.

It is difficult to compare Lester Breslow with others in the field because of the combination of characteristics which makes him unique.

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide these observations and hope they prove useful to your office.

Sincerely,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB/jml
bpc: Dean Lee Stauffer

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