



DIVISION OF  
CORPORATION FINANCE

UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

December 20, 2010

James M. Gower  
Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer  
Rigel Pharmaceuticals, Inc.  
1180 Veterans Boulevard  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

**Re: Rigel Pharmaceuticals, Inc.  
Registration Statement on Form S-3  
Filed December 14, 2010  
File No. 333-171159**

Dear Mr. Gower:

We have limited our review of your registration statement to those issues we have addressed in our comment.

After reviewing any amendment to your registration statement, we may have additional comments.

General

1. We note that there are outstanding comments on your Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009 filed March 2, 2010. We will not be in a position to accelerate the effectiveness of your registration statement until all comments on this filing are resolved.

We urge all persons who are responsible for the accuracy and adequacy of the disclosure in the filing to be certain that the filing includes the information the Securities Act of 1933 and all applicable Securities Act rules require. Since the company and its management are in possession of all facts relating to a company's disclosure, they are responsible for the accuracy and adequacy of the disclosures they have made.

Notwithstanding our comments, in the event you request acceleration of the effective date of the pending registration statement please provide a written statement from the company acknowledging that:

- should the Commission or the staff, acting pursuant to delegated authority, declare the filing effective, it does not foreclose the Commission from taking any action with respect to the filing;

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- the action of the Commission or the staff, acting pursuant to delegated authority, in declaring the filing effective, does not relieve the company from its full responsibility for the adequacy and accuracy of the disclosure in the filing; and
- the company may not assert staff comments and the declaration of effectiveness as a defense in any proceeding initiated by the Commission or any person under the federal securities laws of the United States.

Please refer to Rules 460 and 461 regarding requests for acceleration. We will consider a written request for acceleration of the effective date of the registration statement as confirmation of the fact that those requesting acceleration are aware of their respective responsibilities under the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 as they relate to the proposed public offering of the securities specified in the above registration statement. Please allow adequate time for us to review any amendment prior to the requested effective date of the registration statement.

You may Karen Ubell at (202) 551-3873 or me at (202) 551-3715 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Riegel  
Assistant Director

cc: Suzanne Sawochka Hooper, Esq.  
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Five Palo Alto Square  
3000 El Camino Real  
Palo Alto, CA 94306-2155