



DIVISION OF
CORPORATION FINANCE

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

March 28, 2012

Via E-mail

Christopher Garabedian
President & Chief Executive Officer
AVI BioPharma, Inc.
3450 Monte Villa Parkway, Suite 101
Bothell, WA 98021

**Re: AVI BioPharma, Inc.
Registration Statement on Form S-3
Filed March 21, 2012
File No. 333-180258**

Dear Mr. Garabedian:

We have limited our review of your registration statement to the issue we have addressed in the following comment.

We note that you have a pending confidential treatment request. Please be advised that we will not be in a position to consider a request for acceleration of effectiveness of the registration statement until we resolve all issues concerning the confidential treatment request.

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;
- 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

Christopher Garabedian
AVI BioPharma, Inc.
March 28, 2012
Page 2

- 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.

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

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeffrey Riedler

Jeffrey Riedler
Assistant Director