

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 10, 2022

Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.
Acting Director
National Institutes of Health

Dear Dr. Tabak,

Thank you for your service to our nation's health. As Members of Congress, we are concerned the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is placing undue priority on funding experiments on animals that have failed to lead to treatments, vaccines, and cures for human diseases. NIH's own startling statistic shows that 95% of new drugs fail in human trials¹ and 90% of basic research, much of it involving animal models, fails to lead to human therapies.² Moreover, in certain areas of research, the failure rates for new drugs are even higher: Alzheimer's disease (99.6%),³ sepsis (100%),⁴ and stroke (100%).⁵

On September 16, in a monumental move for scientific research, motivated largely by the scientific failings of animal models, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Commission to create an action plan to end all experiments on animals.⁶ The resolution⁷ was proposed by Members of Parliament (MEPs) who reviewed PETA's Research Modernization Deal⁸ and calls for accelerating scientific innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing, and education. The MEPs have directed the European Commission to work with scientists, including scientists from animal protection organizations, to accomplish this. Currently, the U.S. and NIH have no such action plan.

The lack of a firm commitment to modernizing research puts the U.S. at risk of losing its role as the world leader in biomedical research and deflects funding from research that could address and alleviate some of the world's most deadly diseases.

We ask that you direct the NIH to begin to address these issues by immediately taking the following actions:

1. Cease funding of new projects involving animals for areas of disease research where there is ample evidence of poor translation from animal models to humans.
2. Conduct thorough systematic scientific reviews of the utility of animal-based research in all remaining disease and research areas in order to identify additional areas in which the use of animals can be immediately ended.

3. Prioritize funding for research that uses non-animal, human-relevant research methods, including preventative and interventional research involving human participants.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Nancy Mace
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



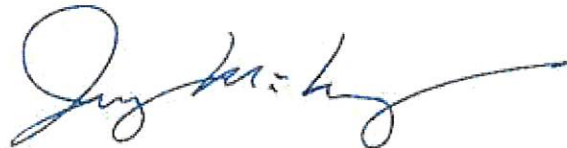
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress

-
- ¹ National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. Transforming Translational Science. <https://ncats.nih.gov/files/NCATS-factsheet.pdf>. Published Winter 2019. Accessed September 17, 2021.
- ² Contopoulos-Ioannidis DG, Ntzani E, Ioannidis JP. Translation of highly promising basic science research into clinical applications. *Am J Med*. 2003;114(6):477-484.
- ³ Pistollato F, Ohayon EL, Lam A, et al. Alzheimer disease research in the 21st century: Past and current failures, new perspectives and funding opportunities. *Oncotarget*. 2016;7(26):38999-39016.
- ⁴ National Advisory General Medical Sciences Council Working Group on Sepsis. Final Report. <https://www.nigms.nih.gov/News/reports/Documents/nagmsc-working-group-on-sepsis-final-report.pdf>. Published May 17, 2019. Accessed September 20, 2021.
- ⁵ Roth S, Liesz A. Stroke research at the crossroads—where are we heading? *Swiss Med Wkly*. 2016;146:w14329.
- ⁶ European Parliament. MEPs demand EU action plan to end the use of animals in research and testing. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210910IPR11926/meps-demand-eu-action-plan-to-end-the-use-of-animals-in-research-and-testing>. Published September 15, 2021. Accessed September 17, 2021.
- ⁷ European Parliament. Motion for a Resolution B9-0425/2021. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0387_EN.html. Updated September 16, 2021. Accessed September 16, 2021.
- ⁸ People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. The Research Modernization Deal. <https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PETA-2021-Research-Modernization-Deal.pdf>. Updated October 2020. Accessed September 16, 2021.