



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute on Alcohol
Abuse and Alcoholism
5635 Fishers Lane
Bethesda, MD 20892-9304

SEP 17 2004

Ms. Kate Turlington
Investigations Liaison
Research and Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
501 Front Street
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear Ms. Turlington:

Thank you for your letter of concern regarding alcohol research at the Bowles Center for Alcohol Studies at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (UNC). NIAAA is committed to ensuring that all animals used in scientific research are treated humanely, and that all animal experimentation contributes significantly to our understanding of human illness and disease. NIH has broad authority to regulate animal research conducted with federal funds. The following excerpts from the NIH Grants Policy Statement outline the general framework of this authority, which also defines the responsibilities of the investigator and sponsoring institution:

"The *PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (the Policy) requires that applicant organizations proposing to use vertebrate animals in NIH-supported activities file a written Animal Welfare Assurance with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. The Policy, which defines "animal" as "any live, vertebrate animal used or intended for use in research, research training, experimentation, or biological testing or for related purposes," stipulates that the applicant/grantee bears responsibility for the humane care and use of animals in NIH-supported research activities. The Policy implements and supplements the U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training. It requires the applicant to establish appropriate policies and procedures for humane care and use of animals, based on the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, and to comply with the Animal Welfare Act and its implementing regulations. This includes appointment of an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) with specified responsibilities.

"No NIH award for research involving live vertebrate animals will be made unless the applicant organization and all performance sites are operating in accordance with an approved Animal Welfare Assurance and provide verification that the IACUC has reviewed and approved those sections of the application that involve use of vertebrate animals, in accordance with the requirements of the Policy."

As the granting agency, NIAAA requires that the relevant policies are followed in awarding and monitoring federally-funded research with animals. However, specific concerns regarding the

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use of animals by an investigator must be addressed by the university involved and the NIH Office of Lab Animal Welfare (OLAW). OLAW is the office with responsibility, authority, and resources for investigating animal welfare issues. I am fully aware of the ongoing investigation OLAW is conducting in relation to alcohol research at UNC. NIAAA will ensure that all evidence of animal abuse and misconduct is adequately and completely addressed by UNC as a condition for continuing NIAAA's support of this research.

Again, I very much appreciate your concern about the type of alcohol research being conducted at UNC.

Sincerely,



Ting-Kai Li, M.D.

Director

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse
and Alcoholism