

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 26, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Madame Secretary,

Thank you for your leadership and important work to protect the health of all Americans. We write to express our concerns with reports of animal abuse at a taxpayer-funded facility that provides services to several agencies within HHS.

Recently, the AP and other news outlets have described an investigation by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals that has revealed troubling instances of possible animal neglect and mistreatment by a Florida-based company called Primate Products, Inc. (PPI). PPI specializes in the importation, quarantine, and sale of monkeys used in biomedical research, as well as the collection and sale of tissues and fluids from these animals.

As a result of this investigation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has opened its own investigation into PPI, and its initial inspection cited at least 25 violations of the Animal Welfare Act. According to the USDA's initial findings, monkeys have been traumatically handled, left outside in below-freezing conditions with no heat source, housed in incompatible and aggressive groups, and ignored when in need of treatment for serious injuries.

As you are aware, PPI has been awarded federal contracts in excess of \$13 million from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of Defense. Accordingly, we strongly urge the Agency to conduct its own inquiry into possible animal abuse at PPI, and review your contracts with the company to determine whether an action should be taken pending the results of the USDA's investigation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response and to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



THEODORE E. DEUTCH  
Member of Congress



ALCEE L. HASTINGS  
Member of Congress



LOIS FRANKEL  
Member of Congress