



May 12, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of  
Representatives  
H-232, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of  
Representatives  
H-204, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-226, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-255, United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy,  
and Minority Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your leadership and efforts to keep our citizens safe during these  
uncertain times. We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well.

We are writing to you on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals  
(PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters to ask that, as  
you lead Congress and our nation through this health crisis and into life after the  
pandemic, you take full advantage of this unique opportunity to redirect our  
nation's resources to the most effective scientific research available.

Across the country, university closures prompted by the outbreak of the novel  
coronavirus have led to the mass cancellation of research projects involving  
animals. This brings us to a crossroads and which direction we choose will  
determine whether or not we will find treatments, cures, and vaccines for the  
many diseases that sicken and kill us.

The current research paradigm is a failure. Scientists, as we have seen in recent  
weeks, focus on developing an animal "model" of disease. If the animals do not  
normally develop a condition, which is so often the case for human ailments just  
such as Alzheimer's disease, they seek to create symptoms that mimic the  
disease. Even when animals can be infected, as monkeys can be with COVID-19  
and HIV, the pathogen affects them differently from humans.

But the data are clear: This research model fails to yield effective treatments.  
Bringing a new drug to market may cost up to \$2 billion and take as long as 15  
years. Despite this considerable investment, a staggering 95 percent of new drugs  
that enter human trials fail, even though they appeared "safe" and "effective" in  
tests on animals—leaving patients and their families suffering.

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- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

Despite decades of experiments and billions of dollars, the failure rates for drugs developed using animals are staggering:

- Alzheimer's disease – 99.6% failure
- Cancer – 96.6% failure
- HIV/AIDS vaccines – 100% failure
- Strokes – 100% failure
- Sepsis – 100% failure.

When a new medication succeeds, it is *in spite* of the tests on animals, not because of them.

Now is the moment, when most non-COVID-related studies have been paused, to reaffirm our role as the world leaders in research, shift away from the failed paradigm, and embrace the change that will bring desperately needed treatments, cures, and vaccines. Many of the methods and tools are already available, but they compete for funding with animal experimentation, thus perpetuating the old paradigm.

Toward this end, we urge you to accept and implement the Research Modernization Deal, which maps out a strategy for replacing the use of animals in experiments with human-relevant methods and includes: eliminating the use of animals immediately in areas where they have already shown to be poor surrogates for humans; critically reviewing additional areas of research to determine where animal use can be phased out; introducing an ethical cost/benefit analysis system into U.S. policies governing the use of animals in biomedical research; promoting the international harmonization and acceptance of non-animal testing methods among government agencies and research bodies; and redirecting funds from animal experiments to the development of non-animal methods.

The Research Modernization Deal has been endorsed by the National Medical Association, a national professional and scientific organization representing the interests of more than 50,000 African American physicians and the patients they serve, as well as the National Hispanic Medical Association, a non-profit association representing the interests of 50,000 licensed Hispanic physicians in the United States.

Please see the following link to view the Research Modernization Deal in full: [https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US\\_FINAL\\_2020\\_300.pdf](https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/The-Research-Modernization-Deal-Report-US_FINAL_2020_300.pdf)

Will Congress act quickly to adopt this evidence-based strategy to make sure that *all* taxpayer-funded research going forward is in the best interest of our nation's health? We would be honored to meet with you to discuss it. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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