



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

August 20, 2020

Dianne E. Ray, C.P.A., M.P.A.
Colorado Office of the State Auditor
State Services Building
1525 Sherman St., 7th Floor
Denver, CO 80203

Via e-mail: osa.ga@state.co.us

Dear Auditor Ray,

Thank you in advance for your time. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide. **Based on the information below, we request that your office audit the performance of the University of Colorado–Boulder (CU-Boulder) and Anschutz Medical Campus (CU-Anschutz) regarding the apparent waste of state resources allocated to animal research activities.**

In FY 2019, CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz received \$169 million^{1,2} in state appropriations, part of which may have been used to support animal experimentation activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, both campuses issued directives that likely led to the destruction of hundreds of animals they deemed "unnecessary,"³ extraneous, noncritical, or nonessential or described using similar terminology.

CU-Boulder urged its experimenters to "[i]dentify any research experiments or animal breeding that can be potentially ramped down, curtailed or delayed"; informed them that "OAR [the Office of Animal Resources] will euthanize unnecessary breeders ... in order to prevent crowds near euthanasia stations"; and asked them to contact OAR "for guidance on the best way to mark cages that can be euthanized."⁴

CU-Anschutz asked its experimenters "to plan for potential phased reductions of research activities with animals," which included

¹University of Colorado Boulder. (n.d.). *Revenue sources data*.

<http://www.colorado.edu/bfp/budget/currfundsbudget/appropgfcfrevhist.html>.

²University of Colorado. (2018, June 22). *FY 2018–19 operating budget*. <https://www.cu.edu/2018-19-operating-budgetpdf>.

³University of Colorado Boulder Research & Innovation Office. (2020, July 2). *COVID-19 information for research & innovation*.

https://www.colorado.edu/researchinnovation/research-innovation-office-covid-19-resources#vivarium_considerations-2651

⁴*Ibid.*

Washington, D.C.
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Berkeley
2855 Telegraph Ave.
Ste. 301
Berkeley, CA 94705
510-763-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Affiliates:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

"[d]elaying the ordering of new research animals," "[d]elaying the start of new animal studies," "[d]ecreasing colony size to minimum maintenance levels, including separating most breeding animals to the minimum required to maintain unique lines," and "[e]nding research studies early in the vivarium."⁵

That activities supporting "unnecessary," nonessential, noncritical, or extraneous animal experimentation are taking place at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz at an apparent annual cost of millions of dollars, funded by the state, is the height of absurdity and wastefulness, and it is well within the mandate of your office to investigate this matter and rectify it.

We respectfully urge that your office investigate and assess the following information as it relates to the apparent waste of state funds by CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz on activities supporting experiments—and/or on the animals used in them—that the schools deemed extraneous during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- 1) Any and all state-funded activities supporting animal experiments that CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz suspended and/or ended in accordance with its response to COVID-19, such that the experiments may be categorized as unnecessary, extraneous, noncritical, or nonessential or described using similar terminology
- 2) The number and species of any and all animals used in state-funded research activities at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz covered by item number 1 above
- 3) The number and species of any and all animals used in experiments who are categorized by CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz as unnecessary, extraneous, noncritical, or nonessential or described using similar terminology
- 4) The endpoint disposition (to include—but not be limited to—euthanasia, cull, sacrifice, killing, destruction, disposal, and/or reduction in cage census) of any and all animals used in experiments at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz covered by item number 1 above
- 5) The endpoint disposition (to include—but not be limited to—euthanasia, cull, sacrifice, killing, destruction, disposal, and/or reduction in cage census) of any and all animals at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz used in experiments receiving state funds who are themselves covered by item number 3 above
- 6) State funds used to support experiments at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz covered by item number 1 above, to include—but not be limited to—the purchase, breeding, housing, feeding, maintenance, and/or veterinary care of any and all animals used in these experiments, and/or the payment of salaries and/or wages of personnel who attended to any and all animals used in these experiments

⁵University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. (n.d.). *Coronavirus research guidance*. <https://www.peta.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/University-of-Colorado-Anschutz-Medical-Campus-COVID-19-directive-regarding-animal-research.pdf>. This information has since been updated (<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/coronavirus/research-guidance>).

- 7) State funds used to purchase, breed, house, feed, maintain, or administer veterinary care to any and all animals—or pay the salaries and/or wages of personnel who attended to them—at CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz covered by item number 3 above

Furthermore, the decisions by CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz to keep purchasing, breeding, housing, feeding, and maintaining animals to be used in state-funded research activities is at odds with the U.S. Public Health Service's *Guide for the Care and Use of Animals*, which includes the principle of "consideration of alternatives (in vitro systems, computer simulations, and/or mathematical models) to reduce or replace the use of animals,"⁶ and with the *U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training* (1985), which state, "The animals selected for a procedure should be of an appropriate species and quality and the minimum number required to obtain valid results."⁷

When CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz buy, breed, trap, and/or use animals who at any time—not just during the COVID-19 pandemic—can be deemed "unnecessary," extraneous, nonessential, or noncritical or described using similar terminology, they are squandering limited public resources and flouting the bedrock "3Rs" principles of reducing, replacing, and refining the use of animals in experimentation that are enshrined in government regulations and policies.

Moreover, the Congressional Research Service has found that during the COVID-19 pandemic, "[s]uspending research may result in additional costs for activities such as animal care," and "[r]estarting research, when conditions permit, may also incur costs for staff time and supplies to ... reestablish laboratory animal populations."⁸ Colorado taxpayers should not be responsible for incurring additional costs to re-establish research activities involving animals, since CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz deemed many of them not to be essential to the experiments and because resuming these activities and repopulating animals in laboratories at taxpayers' expense would appear to violate federal regulations and policies that mandate the minimization of animal use in experiments.

Based on this information, we urge your office to assess the use of public money, personnel, property, equipment, and space by CU-Boulder and CU-Anschutz for activities supporting experiments on animals that they deem "unnecessary," extraneous, nonessential, or noncritical or describe using

⁶National Research Council (U.S.) Committee for the Update of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. (2011). *Guide for the care and use of laboratory animals*. 8th edition. <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/guide-for-the-care-and-use-of-laboratory-animals.pdf>.

⁷National Research Council (U.S.) Committee for the Update of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. (2011). *Guide for the care and use of laboratory animals. Appendix B: U.S. government principles for the utilization and care of vertebrate animals used in testing, research, and training*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK54048/>.

⁸Congressional Research Service. (2020, April 10). *Effects of COVID-19 on the federal research and development enterprise*. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46309>.

similar terminology. If wastefulness is corroborated, we request that you take all corrective actions to ensure that current state-funded research activities involving such animals are permanently terminated, that new state-funded research activities that include such animals are no longer approved, and that the breeding and acquisition of such animals for state-funded research activities are prohibited.

You can contact me at MagnoliaM@peta.org. We look forward to your reply regarding this important matter. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Magnolia Martínez", with a horizontal line underneath.

Magnolia Martínez, Ph.D.
Special Projects Manager, Laboratory Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510