TRANSPARENCY IN ANIMAL RESEARCH

RESOLVED, that the Board is encouraged to adopt a reporting system relating to the Company's use of animals in laboratories. The report should include the number and species of animals used and information on proactive collaboration with FDA and other regulatory agencies to provide data from alternative tests.

Supporting Statement:

Our Company has posted on its website *Resetting Responsibilities*[1] -- a detailed account of General Electric's accomplishments aimed at protecting the environment and indigenous peoples. However, *Resetting Responsibilities* contains no information concerning the Company's accomplishments in the reduction, refinement, and replacement of animals used for research and regulatory testing. GE has an ethical responsibility to reduce and replace the use of animals and to provide shareholders with its plans towards this goal. Multi-national companies such as Shell[2] and Novo Nordisk[3] disclose animal use numbers and publicize details of their efforts to incorporate replacement methods.

GE Healthcare and GE subsidiary Amersham develop medical products for humans and need to use the most scientifically rigorous, human-relevant methods available. There is a scientific imperative for change since data from animals do not extrapolate well to humans and because of the suffering inflicted on sentient animals.

Animals in laboratories are subject to painful experiments and constant fear and stress. They spend their lives in unnatural settings, small cages, and are often deprived of companionship and exercise. Undercover investigations have exposed atrocities even in

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[1] http://www.ge.com/citizenship/reporting/index.jsp
[2] http://www.shell.com/home/content/responsible_energy/environment/responsible_products/animal_testing/approach_animal_testing_18042008.html
[3] http://www.novonordisk.com/science/bioethics/animal_ethics.asp

accredited institutions and filmed footage shows animals being beaten and otherwise tormented and abused.[4]

Further, most animal tests do not protect humans. Ninety-two percent of drugs deemed safe and effective in animals fail when tested in humans.[5] Half of the remaining eight percent are later relabeled or withdrawn from the market due to unanticipated, severe adverse effects. These numbers demonstrate the failure of animal experiments to predict human safety and efficacy, along with the attendant risks of product liability litigation, adverse publicity, and wasted resources.

In amending *Resetting Responsibilities* to address animal testing, the Company should consider the recent report published by the National Academies' National Research Council, *Toxicity Testing in the 21st Century: A Vision and a Strategy* (2007). The report states that recent scientific advances can "transform toxicity testing from a system based on whole-animal testing to one founded primarily on *in vitro* methods." These approaches will improve efficiency with cost cutting, greater speed, and prediction for humans, as well as reduced animal use and suffering.

Given the above, this Company should concretely outline the implementation of alternatives that will safely and effectively address human health risks. We urge shareholders to support this socially and ethically important public policy proposal.

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[4]No undercover investigation has been undertaken at a GE facility. GE's animal welfare policy, at http://www.ge.com/citizenship/performance_areas/products_services_rdanimals.jsp, mentions replacing and reducing animal tests, but lacks transparency in terms of measuring success.

[5] *FDA Commissioner: Steps to Advance the Earliest Phases of Clinical Research in the Development of Innovative Medical Treatments* (von Eschenbach, Andrew C. 2006): http://www.fda.gov/oc/speeches/2006/fdateleconference0112.html