

## TRANSPARENCY IN ANIMAL RESEARCH

**RESOLVED**, to promote transparency and minimize the use of animals, the Board is requested to issue an annual report to shareholders disclosing the number and species of all animals used in-house and at contract research laboratories; the number and species used for explicitly required tests; the number and species used in basic research and development; and the Company's plans to reduce and phase out animal testing wherever possible.

### *Supporting Statement:*

Our Company has posted on its website *Renewing Responsibilities*<sup>1</sup> -- a detailed account of General Electric's accomplishments aimed at protecting the environment and indigenous peoples. However, *Renewing Responsibilities* contains no information concerning the Company's accomplishments in the reduction and replacement of animals used for research and regulatory testing even though our Company acknowledges that such testing involves animal suffering.<sup>2</sup> Multi-national companies such as Shell<sup>3</sup> and Novo Nordisk<sup>4</sup> disclose animal use numbers and publicize their efforts to incorporate replacement methods.

GE Healthcare and GE's subsidiary Amersham develop medical products for humans and have a responsibility to use the most scientifically rigorous, human-relevant methods available. Animals used in laboratory experiments experience pain, fear and stress. They spend their lives in unnatural settings – caged and deprived of companionship – and subjected to painful experiments. Undercover investigations have exposed atrocities even in accredited institutions and filmed footage shows animals being beaten and otherwise tormented and abused.<sup>5</sup>

Our Company has an ethical and fiscal obligation to ensure that a minimum number of animals are used and that the best science possible is employed in the development of products. Given the fact that 92% of drugs deemed safe and effective when tested in animals fail when tested in humans and that, of the remaining 8%, half are later relabeled or withdrawn due to unanticipated, severe adverse effects, there is a clear scientific imperative for improving how our Company's products are tested.<sup>6</sup>

In amending *Renewing Responsibilities* to address animal testing, our Company should consider the recent report published by the National Academies' National Research Council.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ge.com/citizenship/reporting/index.jsp>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ge.com/citizenship/our-priorities/our-products-services/product-services-issues/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.shell.com/home/content/environment\\_society/environment/product\\_stewardship/animal\\_testing](http://www.shell.com/home/content/environment_society/environment/product_stewardship/animal_testing)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.novonordisk.com/science/bioethics/animal\\_ethics.asp](http://www.novonordisk.com/science/bioethics/animal_ethics.asp)

<sup>5</sup> No undercover investigation has been undertaken at a GE facility though recent atrocities uncovered in a contract testing laboratory can be viewed at

<http://origin.www.peta.org/tv/videos/animal-experimentation/599609536001.aspx>.

GE's animal welfare policy is referenced in footnote 2. Although GE's policy extols the virtues of the 3Rs, there is no transparency in terms of measuring its success.

<sup>6</sup> FDA Commissioner: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Speeches/ucm053539.htm>

That 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.”<sup>7</sup> These approaches will improve efficiency with cost cutting, increased speed, greater predictivity to humans, and reduced animal use and suffering.

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

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<sup>7</sup> *Toxicity Testing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Vision and a Strategy* (NRC 2007)