



March 20, 2006

Kate Turlington, Manager of Investigations  
Research & Investigations  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear Ms. Turlington:

My comments on specific veterinary issues follow.

### **Veterinary Expert Statement of Dr. Erica Rambus, DVM**

#### **Heartworm**

Dogs in heartworm-endemic areas—hot, humid climates—should be on year-round heartworm preventative. Failure to provide preventative measures is a deviation from customary veterinary care and is negligent. Moreover, when a dog tests positive for heartworm, it is reckless and derelict to postpone treatment, as the disease will most assuredly worsen, further compromising the dog's health ("worm burden" will increase). The failure to use basic prophylactic measures to prevent and treat disease in a laboratory is indicative of inadequate husbandry which has obvious implications for the quality of the research being carried out.

#### **Arrhythmia**

A dog diagnosed with an arrhythmia (usually referred to as "dysrhythmia") should have a full veterinary work up, including chest radiographs, EKG, echocardiogram, and heartworm test. While not all arrhythmias require drug treatment, the patient should receive regular exams.

#### **Hypertension**

A dog diagnosed with hypertension should always receive drug therapy. Hypertension can lead to heart damage if left untreated.

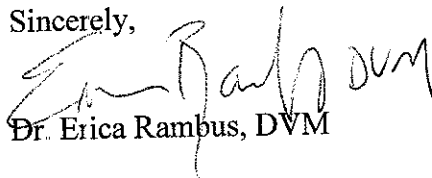
### **Overgrown nails**

Dogs' fingernails should be trimmed on a regular basis, especially in settings such as laboratories, where dogs are not permitted to engage in activities that allow their nails to wear down naturally.

### **Veterinary Medical Records**

An indispensable component of adequate veterinary care involves maintaining detailed medical records. This is particularly important in order to ensure that diseases are detected, monitored, and treated adequately.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erica Rambus DVM". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "E".

Dr. Erica Rambus, DVM