

TRANSPARENCY IN ANIMAL RESEARCH

RESOLVED, to promote transparency and minimize the use of animals, the Board should issue an annual report to shareholders disclosing procedures to ensure proper animal care in-house and at contract laboratories, specifics on how our Company uses animals, and plans to promote alternatives to animal use.

Supporting Statement:

In the last three years, our Company used more than 8,000 animals in-house. This number includes more than 4,000 dogs and almost 500 primates. More than 3,300 animals were used in painful experiments. This number does not include animals used in Abbott experiments at contract laboratories, nor does it include vast numbers of additional animals who are not required to be counted but who are used most commonly in animal experiments.

Our Company posts a number of public policies on its website,¹ including goals for environmental protection² and animal welfare.³ The environmental protection policy includes precise air, water, waste, energy, combustion, and even accident and injury rate data. In contrast, the animal welfare policy provides no similar metrics.

Despite touting the virtues of reducing animal use, our Company's published animal welfare policy provides no specifics such as trends in animal use or information on the success/failure of animal reduction and replacement measures. Other international companies, such as Novo Nordisk,⁴ disclose animal use numbers and publicize their efforts to incorporate replacement methods.

Our Company develops pharmaceuticals for humans and has a responsibility to use the most scientifically rigorous, human-relevant and humane 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 of other accredited institutions have exposed atrocities; filmed footage shows animals being beaten and otherwise tormented and abused.⁵

Given that 92% of drugs deemed safe and effective when tested on animals fail in human clinical trials and that, of the remaining 8%, half are later relabeled or withdrawn due to unanticipated, severe adverse effects, there is a clear scientific imperative for improving how our Company's products are tested.⁶

¹ <http://www.abbott.com/citizenship/priorities/safeguard.htm>

² <http://www.abbott.com/citizenship/key-metrics/environmental.htm>

³ <http://www.abbott.com/citizenship/priorities/innovate/animal-welfare.htm>

⁴ http://www.novonordisk.com/science/bioethics/animal_ethics.asp

⁵ No undercover investigation has been undertaken at an Abbott facility, but atrocities were documented in a contract laboratory used by Abbott (<http://www.peta.org/tv/videos/animal-experimentation/86975260001.aspx>) and in one used by other major pharmaceutical companies (<http://origin.www.peta.org/tv/videos/animal-experimentation/599609536001.aspx>)

⁶ FDA Commissioner: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/speeches/2006/fdateleconference0112.html>

Our Company must incorporate recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences to use recent scientific advances to “transform toxicity testing from a system based on whole-animal testing to one founded primarily on *in vitro* methods.”⁷ These approaches will improve efficiency, reduce costs, increase speed and predictivity to humans, and reduce animal use and suffering.

Given the above, our Company should disclose its use of animals, procedures to ensure the welfare of those animals, and 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 proposal.

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