February 10, 2022

Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.
Acting Director
National Institutes of Health

Dear Dr. Tabak,

Thank you for your service to our nation’s health. As Members of Congress, we are concerned the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is placing undue priority on funding experiments on animals that have failed to lead to treatments, vaccines, and cures for human diseases. NIH’s own startling statistic shows that 95% of new drugs fail in human trials and 90% of basic research, much of it involving animal models, fails to lead to human therapies. Moreover, in certain areas of research, the failure rates for new drugs are even higher: Alzheimer’s disease (99.6%), sepsis (100%), and stroke (100%).

On September 16, in a monumental move for scientific research, motivated largely by the scientific failings of animal models, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the European Commission to create an action plan to end all experiments on animals. The resolution was proposed by Members of Parliament (MEPs) who reviewed PETA’s Research Modernization Deal and calls for accelerating scientific innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing, and education. The MEPs have directed the European Commission to work with scientists, including scientists from animal protection organizations, to accomplish this. Currently, the U.S. and NIH have no such action plan.

The lack of a firm commitment to modernizing research puts the U.S. at risk of losing its role as the world leader in biomedical research and deflects funding from research that could address and alleviate some of the world’s most deadly diseases.

We ask that you direct the NIH to begin to address these issues by immediately taking the following actions:

1. Cease funding of new projects involving animals for areas of disease research where there is ample evidence of poor translation from animal models to humans.

2. Conduct thorough systematic scientific reviews of the utility of animal-based research in all remaining disease and research areas in order to identify additional areas in which the use of animals can be immediately ended.
3. Prioritize funding for research that uses non-animal, human-relevant research methods, including preventative and interventional research involving human participants.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Mace  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress
5 Roth S, Liesz A. Stroke research at the crossroads—where are we heading? Swiss Med Wkly. 2016;146:w14329.