



December 8, 2023

James C. Foster, CEO
Charles River Laboratories

Via e-mail: james.foster@criver.com; James.C.Foster@crl.com

Dear Mr. Foster:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA is a Charles River Laboratories International Inc. shareholder—to share concerns regarding Charles River's importation of primates from Vietnam into the U.S. and Canada.

Earlier this week, an Epidemic Intelligence Service officer from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Global Migration Health reported that in January 2023, 26 long-tailed macaques, representing 4.8% of the total number of monkeys in the shipment, imported from Southeast Asia were found to be infected with *Mycobacterium orygis*, a zoonotic strain of mycobacteria that causes tuberculosis (TB) that hadn't previously been observed among monkeys imported for experimentation. Documents we obtained indicate that this shipment was likely one containing 540 monkeys who originated from the Thanh Cong Biological Creature Co. Ltd. facility in Vietnam and were imported into Houston by Charles River Laboratories. Will you confirm this?

According to CDC documents, the January 2023 shipment wasn't the only one that contained monkeys who were confirmed as being infected with TB during FY2023. In fact, the CDC has released data showing that since 2021, there has been a shocking increase in monkey shipments with confirmed TB cases. Not only does the importation of monkeys infected with TB represent a public health risk at every point along the importation pipeline, the financial burden to Charles River for the extended CDC-mandated quarantine periods, including additional husbandry, personal protective equipment, testing requirements, and the direct loss of animal lives, also cannot be ignored.

It appears that Charles River imported endangered long-tailed macaques from Vietnam into Canada and the U.S. throughout FY2022, halting in February 2023 and beginning again in October 2023. Was the pause due to TB? Despite the global public health risks and the scientific consequences of using animals who are likely latently infected with TB, a Bluebird Nordic plane landed in Hanoi, Vietnam, yesterday and is reportedly transporting another shipment of long-tailed macaques for Charles River. It's dangerously naive to think that these monkeys aren't harboring TB, and it should be expected that even the [CDC's reliance on an archaic, insensitive, and nonspecific tuberculin skin test](#) will likely result in the detection of exposed and infected monkeys, which will once again trigger extended quarantines and the loss of animals.

Whether the unprecedented number of monkeys arriving in the U.S. infected with strains of TB, *Burkholderia pseudomallei*, malaria, or deadly gut bacteria or

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Washington
1536 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-644-PETA

Norfolk
501 Front St.
Norfolk, VA 23510
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org
PETA.org

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

showing clinical signs consistent with filovirus infection is a reflection of the smuggling of wild-caught monkeys into the importation pipeline, reliance on archaic and ineffectual tests to detect dangerous pathogens, or the placement of profits above public health and scientific integrity, the result is the same: Our nation is at risk.

Charles River prides itself on procuring and producing healthy, well-characterized, and purpose-bred animals for sale to clients. But as you reported in the third-quarter earnings call, the industry is changing and the company is expected to use 25% fewer monkeys this year. It's unjustifiable to continue to import monkeys with known public health risks for an industry demanding human-relevant, non-animal research methods. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jones-Engel, Ph.D.
Senior Science Advisor, Primate Experimentation
Laboratory Investigations Department
LisaJE@peta.org

