

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

September 10, 2025

Christina H. Paxson, Ph.D.
President
Brown UniversityVia e-mail: president@brown.edu

Dear President Paxson:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 10.4 million members and supporters globally, over 23,000 of whom live in Rhode Island. Brown University has maintained a Public Health Service-approved Animal Welfare Assurance for decades. This assurance requires adherence to the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, including implementing the 3Rs principle: replacing animal use whenever possible, reducing the number of animals used, and refining procedures to minimize suffering.

Despite this, the university continues to use thousands of animals in its laboratories. A recent inventory reported that Brown used more than 17,900 mice, 160 rats, and nearly 3,000 fishes in experiments. A 2024 federal report also documented the school's use of 19 monkeys, one sheep, 33 pigs, and 34 other Animal Welfare Act (AWA)-covered species in its laboratories. These figures directly contradict the university's assurance to the federal government that it would reduce animal use, exposing a troubling disregard for its stated commitment to adopting non-animal replacements and reducing reliance on animal experimentation.

What exactly is Brown's plan to implement the 3Rs? You have used and killed animals for years with apparently no end in sight, despite your claim to abide by the best practices. We believe the public has the right to know if the university's pledge has been truthful.

Public funds wasted on cruel and ineffective research

In 2024, Brown University received over \$139 million in taxpayer funding from the National Institutes of Health—approximately half of which was directed toward experiments on animals. These experiments include highly invasive procedures in which experimenters [cut into pigs' chests](#) and implanted devices around their arteries that gradually tighten—cutting off blood flow to their hearts for a full 22 minutes before ultimately killing them. In another laboratory, experimenters [cut into monkeys' heads](#) and implanted immobilizing headposts onto their skulls, then forced them to participate in repetitive tasks, offering only droplets of fruit juice as "rewards" to keep them focused. Still other experimenters [pumped chemicals into the backs of baby rats](#) for nearly two weeks before restraining them, exposing some to X-rays, cutting off their testicles, and killing them.

You must be aware that numerous studies dating back more than two decades reveal the failure of animal experiments to lead to cures and treatments for human beings. Conferences, papers, and all manner of information sources show the availability of countless superior, non-animal research methods that produce far more reliable and

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species-relevant results for human health than experiments on animals. PETA scientists' [Research Modernization Now](#) provides a detailed strategy for replacing experiments on animals with humane and human-relevant methods. Have you read it, and what is your plan to implement it or alternative solutions to this burgeoning use of animals on your campus?

Failure to comply with federal animal welfare regulations and guidelines

Brown University has repeatedly failed to comply with minimum federal animal welfare regulations and guidelines, as evidenced by multiple violations documented in federal reports. In recent years, a pump failure in a zebrafish laboratory led to the deaths of approximately 2,000 zebrafish from gas bubble disease. Additionally, the use of expired drugs and off-protocol, unapproved procedures have resulted in multiple animals being found in severe distress and/or moribund. A recurring issue has been the failure to provide adequate water to animals, leading to dehydration and death. These chronic failures underscore the incompetence and negligence of staff who consistently fail to meet even the most basic animal welfare standards—and demonstrate a blatant disregard for both the law and the will of the American public.

Brown's failure to adhere to the 3Rs principles undermines public trust. We ask you to address this matter of public interest without delay. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Alka Chandna, Ph.D.
Vice President
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