



PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

December 12, 2025

Robert J. Jones  
President  
University of Washington

Via email: [president@uw.edu](mailto:president@uw.edu)

Dear President Jones:

We are writing as a neuroscientist and former UW primate scientist and faculty member on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Inc., to urge the University of Washington (UW) not to pursue renewal of its P51 grant for the Washington National Primate Research Center (WaNPRC). Renewal of this grant would lock UW into a costly, high-liability commitment at the very moment federal agencies, funders, and scientific partners are moving decisively away from primate-based research.

### **Financial Risk to UW**

The financial, regulatory, and reputational risks now facing WaNPRC far exceed any plausible benefit to UW as a whole. WaNPRC's chronic inability to recover its operational costs means that renewal of the P51 would require UW to continue subsidizing a program that is structurally incapable of sustaining itself without escalating institutional support. In the current environment, where [UW has seen a 11.1% decrease](#) in its federal funding, this would represent an expanding long-term obligation, not a strategic investment.

### **Federal Policy Shifts Away from Primate Research**

Over the next five years, the foundational funding environment for primate research will contract sharply. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are each reducing or discontinuing primate-based programs, shifting to human-relevant research platforms, and phasing out animal-only funding streams. For a P51 center already struggling to remain competitive, these changes are existential. Some of the most noteworthy examples include:

- **NIH (April 2025)**, [announced](#) the establishment of the Office of Research Innovation, Validation, and Application (ORIVA) to scale nonanimal research approaches.

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

- **FDA (April 2025)**, [released](#) a *Roadmap to Reducing Animal Testing in Preclinical Safety Studies*, encouraging implementation of New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) like organ-on-chip, advanced in vitro assays, and computational toxicology.
- **NIAID (May 2025)**, National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Disease [announced](#) it would not renew funding for two major HIV vaccine consortia, reducing reliance on primate studies.
- **NIH (July 2025)**, announced that new funding opportunities will no longer solicit animal-only proposals, with many excluding animal use entirely. This will significantly reduce opportunities for primate-focused research.
- **CDC (November 2025)**, it was reported in *Science* that the Centers for Disease Control instructed its researchers to [terminate](#) all internal nonhuman primate research programs by the end of the year. This marks the first shutdown of a federal primate lab since NIH retired chimpanzee research, signaling a decisive policy shift at the federal level. Before this decision, the CDC was among WaNPRC's limited external clients for pig-tailed macaques. Regarding this news, UW's own Assistant Vice Provost, Sally Thompson-Iritani, presciently noted, "...I don't think this will stop with CDC."
- **FDA (December 2025)**, issued [draft guidance](#) recommending reduced or eliminated six-month primate toxicity studies for monoclonal antibodies.

### **Strategic Opportunity for UW**

These federal decisions are not abstract—they eliminate many of the very categories of research that P51 centers rely on to justify their existence. As NIH, FDA, and CDC move swiftly and decisively away from primate models, WaNPRC scientists will face sharply reduced opportunities to secure federal funding, and the external demand for primates that once helped offset operating costs will continue to shrink. Continuing to invest in primate infrastructure under these conditions will leave UW responsible for stranded facilities, declining revenue, and escalating maintenance and compliance costs—obligations the P51 renewal would bind the university to assume for years.

In short, the national research landscape is shifting away from the model on which WaNPRC was built. Renewing the P51 would anchor UW to a declining, high-risk research framework just as federal agencies and peer institutions move in the opposite direction. Choosing not to renew would allow UW to redirect resources toward innovative, human-relevant platforms that draw new collaborators, new funding streams, and new public support. This moment offers UW an opportunity to lead in building a future-ready research enterprise.

Thank you for considering this important issue. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further and share additional information about emerging alternatives and funding opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Jones-Engel'.

Lisa Jones-Engel, Ph.D.  
Senior Science Advisor Primate Experimentation  
Department of Laboratory Investigations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Roe'.

Katherine V. Roe, Ph.D.  
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Cc: Washington State Governor Bob Ferguson [Bob.ferguson@gov.wa.gov](mailto:Bob.ferguson@gov.wa.gov)