



**DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY**  
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DEC 04 2025

Maggie Wiśniewska, Ph.D.  
Science Policy Advisor – International Laboratory Methods Division  
Laboratory Investigations Department  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals  
501 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear Dr. Wiśniewska:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals dated September 22, 2025. The Defense Health Agency (DHA) will continue to comply with applicable Federal laws, Department of War (DoW) policies, and DHA publications. As noted in our June 2, 2025, Freedom of Information Act response, U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command Policy 84 has been rescinded, and the DHA has not published an equivalent or replacement policy. The DHA has not and will not conduct or support any prohibited medical research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) activities involving any animal species, to include dogs, cats, nonhuman primates, or marine mammals.

The DoW and the DHA require the use of non-animal alternatives when scientific objectives can be achieved without animal models. However, current non-animal methods are not sufficiently advanced to fully replace all animal models in RDT&E. When animal use is necessary, both the DoW and DHA require RDT&E programs to implement stringent animal care standards. Veterinary experts verify these standards by reviewing proposed RDT&E and conducting periodic on-site inspections, as directed in Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 3216.01, "Use of Animals in DoD Conducted and Supported Research and Training," March 29, 2019.

We are committed to replacing animal use in all areas of RDT&E as alternative methods mature to meet DoW research requirements. Until then, the DHA will continue to critically evaluate the necessity of animal use; invest in the development and validation of alternatives; and collaborate with Federal and commercial partners to ensure alignment with and accelerate implementation of emerging regulatory standards.

Sincerely,

SMITH.DAVID.  
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David J. Smith, M.D.  
Acting Director