

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2017

The Honorable David Shulkin
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Secretary Shulkin:

As you are aware, in July the House unanimously voted to prohibit taxpayer funding in FY18 for the most painful categories of dog experiments conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The bipartisan support from our constituents and Congressional colleagues on this issue—including from countless service members and veterans—has been overwhelming.

In the course of our ongoing work on this issue, we were encouraged to learn that on an ad hoc basis the VA has adopted out healthy dogs no longer needed for research. You have indicated that this sometimes occurs at the Los Angeles VA, and documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act by the nonprofit White Coat Waste Project show that the Cleveland VA has also adopted out some dogs from its laboratories.

Since these dogs can go on to live long, healthy lives and because they have often already cost taxpayers thousands each to purchase and house, this is a fiscally and morally responsible thing to do.

Veterans, in particular, could be ideal beneficiaries of such a program. Veterans often find the companionship of a dog provides remarkable physical, emotional, and social benefits. Placing retired VA research dogs with veterans would be a way to improve two lives at once.

We are very interested in learning more about standard operating procedures for VA's research animal adoptions. Please provide our offices with the following information:

- Is there a standardized VA-wide policy for the adoption of dogs and cats no longer needed for research and testing? If so, please provide a copy.
- What facilities currently allow for dog adoptions, and what is the process for selecting dogs, finding potential homes and placing them?
- How many dogs have been adopted out by VA labs in the last 5 years? Please provide a list of facilities and dog adoption figures.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



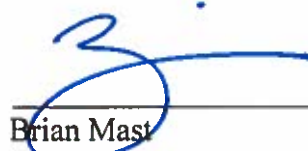
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Daniel Donovan
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Dave Brat
Member of Congress