

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman
Schultz
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military
Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Carter
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military
Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz and Ranking Member Carter,

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2021 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to prevent funds from going to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to perform painful and distressing research on dogs in USDA pain categories D (inflicting pain with relief) and E (inflicting pain without relief). These sometimes-fatal experiments include drilling into dogs' skulls, inducing heart attacks, and collapsing their lungs. Progress has been made to reduce VA dog testing, but the VA still lags behind other agencies in replacing its animal tests with modern technologies that can produce superior results that directly translate to humans. We believe the VA should focus its limited resources on improving the lives of veterans instead of wasting taxpayer dollars on cruel and ineffective dog experimentation.

Congress has already shown its support for ending painful dog studies at the VA through the appropriations process:

- The House voted to add the Brat-Titus amendment to eliminate funding for these studies to the Make America Secure Appropriations Act of 2018 by voice vote.
- Restrictions on the VA's use of dog testing were passed into law in the final FY2018 and FY2019 MilCon-VA appropriations bills.
- The House voted to eliminate funding for VA dog testing in its FY20 MilCon-VA appropriations bill.
- The final FY20 MilCon-VA appropriations bill tightened the FY18 and FY19 restrictions and requires the VA to submit a plan to Congress to "eliminate or reduce" dog testing within five years.

March 17, 2020

Page 2

While we applaud the Subcommittee's leadership in enacting these limitations, we feel that Congress must go further. Bipartisan support to end the VA's inhumane dog experimentation remains high, including among Members of Congress who have served our nation in uniform.

Over a dozen Veterans Service Organizations representing hundreds of thousands of veterans have endorsed congressional efforts to defund the VA's dog testing due to its torturous nature and lack of benefits for veterans. This broad coalition of support includes AMVETS, American G.I. Forum of the U.S., American Humane Association, American Military Retirees Association, DisabledVeterans.org, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Military Order of The Purple Heart, Military-Veterans Advocacy, The Retired Enlisted Association, United States Army Warrant Officers Association, Veterans for Common Sense, Veterans for Peace, Wounded Paw Project, and the White Coat Waste Project.

Accordingly, we ask that you include the following bill language:

Sec. __. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to purchase, breed, transport, house, feed, maintain, dispose of, or experiment on dogs as part of the conduct of any study assigned to pain category D or E, as defined by the Department of Agriculture.

(b) This section shall not apply to training programs or studies of service dogs described in section 1714 of title 38 United States Code or section 17.148 of title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Brian J. Mast
Member of Congress



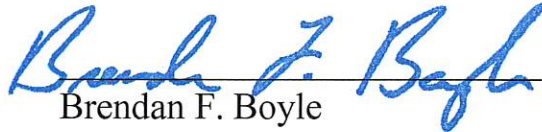
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



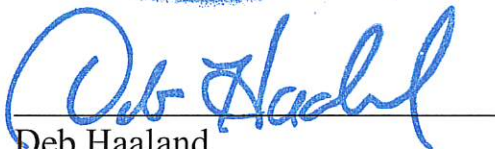
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



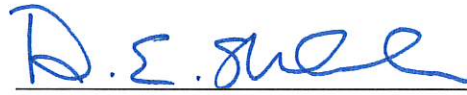
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



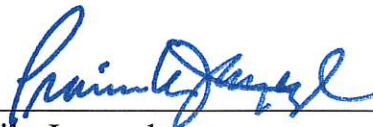
Deb Haaland
Member of Congress



Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress



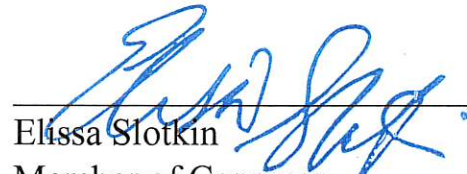
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress




Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



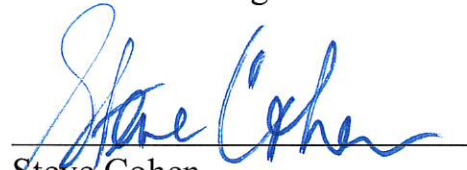
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



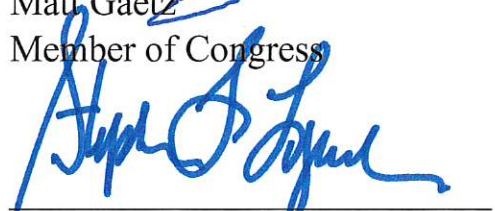
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



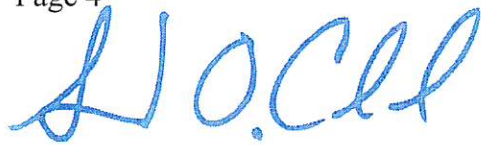
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



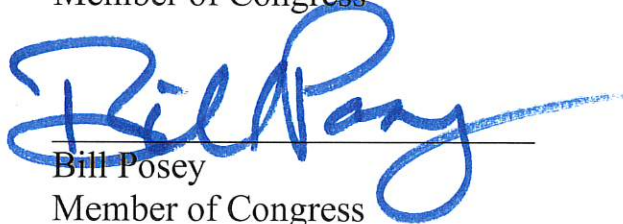
Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



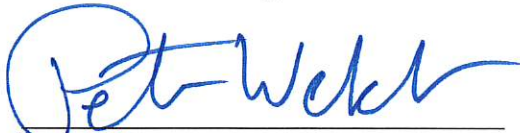
Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



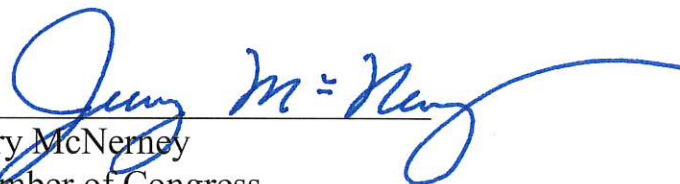
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



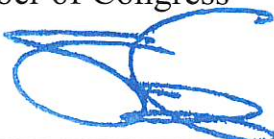
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



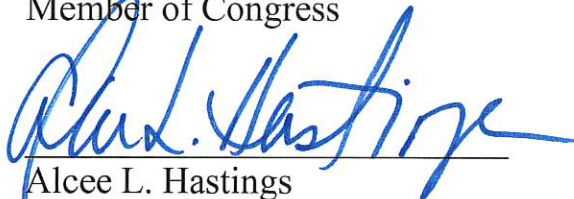
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



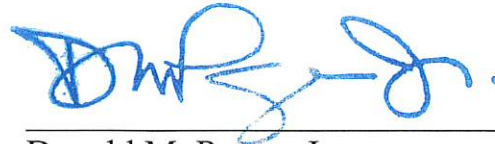
Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



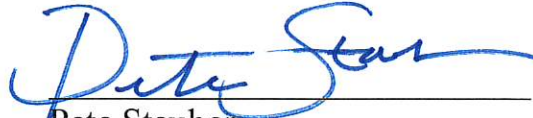
Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



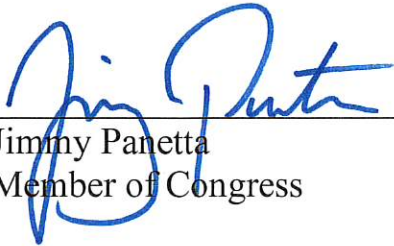
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



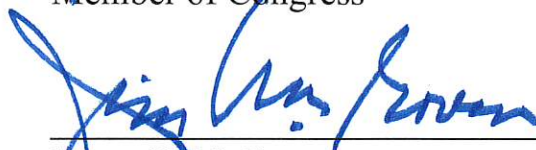
Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Susie Lee
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams
Member of Congress