

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 27, 2022

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

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

Dear Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz and Ranking Member Carter,

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2023 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to once again 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). We also respectfully request that you extend the provision this year to cover cats following revelations that the VA is the last federal agency performing painful testing on cats.

These sometimes fatal experiments include inducing heart attacks in dogs and drilling into cats' skulls. Progress has been made to reduce VA dog and cat testing, but cats and dogs are still being subjected to painful and needless experiments. Last Congress, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine determined that most recent VA research on dogs was unnecessary and that VA has consistently failed to adequately seek and implement alternatives. The VA Inspector General also found that the agency had illegally spent nearly \$400,000 on dog testing that lacked proper approval. 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.

Thanks to your leadership, Congress has already shown its strong support for ending painful dog and cat studies at the VA through the appropriations process. As you know, language to defund the VA's painful dog testing was passed by the House as part of MILCON-VA appropriations bills for FY20 and FY21. Federal funding bills signed into law from FY18- 21 have all included language drastically restricting painful VA dog and cat testing and directing the VA to "eliminate or reduce" it by 2025.

Experiments have already been discontinued at several VA facilities, but dozens of dogs and cats are still being subjected to painful VA research.

Bipartisan support to end the VA's inhumane dog and cat experimentation immediately remains high, including among Members of Congress who have served our nation in uniform. Last Congress, the PUPPERS Act (HR 1155) and CATS Act (HR 8867)—standalone bills to end

taxpayer funding for painful VA dog and cat testing—enjoyed the combined support of over 150 cosponsors including 19 military veterans. Veterans Service Organizations, animal protection groups and others have also endorsed these efforts.

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 or cats 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.

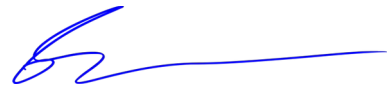
We thank you for your continued leadership on this issue and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



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Brian J. Mast  
Member of Congress



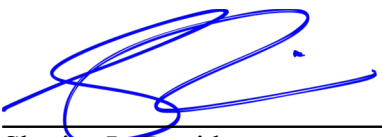
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Nicole Malliotakis  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



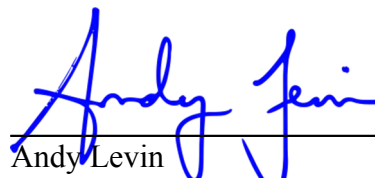
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Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



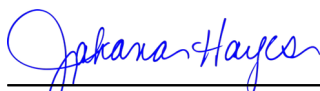
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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



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Andy Levin  
Member of Congress



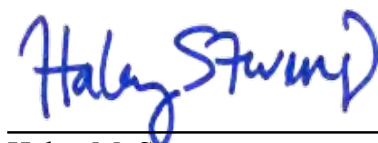
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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



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Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



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Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



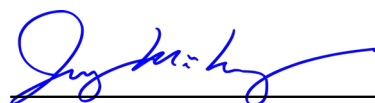
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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



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Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



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Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress



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David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



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Gregorio Kilili Camacho  
Sablan  
Member of Congress



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SETH MOULTON  
Member of Congress



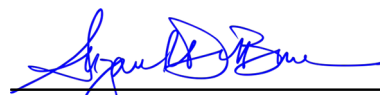
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John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress



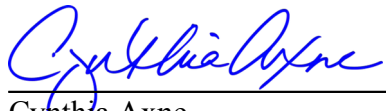
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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



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Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



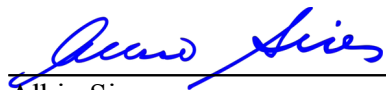
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Cynthia Axne  
Member of Congress



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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



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André Carson  
Member of Congress



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Jason Crow  
Member of Congress