

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2022

Dr. Lawrence Tabak
Acting Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Dr. Tabak:

Over the past year, my colleagues and I have become increasingly concerned about the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) funding of outdated and inhumane testing on puppies and dogs.

The recent cancelation of unnecessary drug tests on dogs being planned by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) underscores the wastefulness of taxpayer-funded dog experimentation and raises serious questions about NIH's oversight of grants and contracts.

Last year, NIAID issued a \$1.8 million contract requesting five separate experiments on dogs to test a new drug to treat hay fever.¹ NIAID released related records to the White Coat Waste Project revealing that the company contracted by NIAID to do the dog tests subsequently proposed using a non-dog model instead.² Shortly after news coverage of NIAID's planned puppy tests became widespread, however, it was announced that the dog experiments were canceled and NIAID stated that the tests would be performed in an alternative model.³ As mentioned in a previous letter to NIH, the Food and Drug Administration has publicly stated that dog testing for new drugs is not required.⁴

NIAID's recent about-face begs the question: why did NIAID intend to use taxpayer dollars to fund cruel dog tests that were completely unnecessary and not required from the outset?

This is not an isolated incident. In October 2021, 24 bipartisan Members of Congress sent a letter to Dr. Fauci, expressing concerns about cruel NIAID-funded drug tests on puppies.⁵ And in February 2022, 16 bipartisan Members of Congress sent a letter to the National Institute on Drug Abuse regarding the use of dogs in tests to evaluate a drug to treat cocaine abuse.⁶ There have been other reports of NIH-funded drug testing on dogs as well.⁷

¹ <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/nih-to-spend-2-million-in-taxpayer-funds-experimenting-on-puppies/>

² <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2022/05/23/killed-for-a-runny-nose-wcw-discovers-5-new-fauci-funded-puppy-experiments/>

³ <https://freebeacon.com/latest-news/nih-nixes-painful-puppy-experiments-after-free-beacon-report/>

⁴ <https://mace.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-mace-leads-letter-dr-anthony-fauci-cruel-taxpayer-funded-experiments>

⁵ <https://mace.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-mace-leads-letter-dr-anthony-fauci-cruel-taxpayer-funded-experiments>

⁶ <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2022/02/07/congress-investigating-claims-nih-funding-cruel-experiments-injecting-puppies-cocaine/>

⁷ <https://timcast.com/news/exclusive-fauci-funded-labs-purchased-dogs-to-use-in-drug-tests-from-disgraced-beagle-breeding-facility-that-was-shut-down-for-cruelty/>

As these efforts—including Rep. Mace’s *Preventing Animal Abuse and Waste Act of 2021* (HR 6186) to defund NIAID dog testing—demonstrate, cutting NIH-funded experimentation on dogs enjoys bipartisan support in Congress.

Other federal agencies, including the FDA,⁸ Environmental Protection Agency⁹ and the Department of Veterans Affairs¹⁰ have already launched laudable efforts to curb testing on dogs and other animals.

With no apparent plan in place to reduce inefficient and painful testing on dogs, the NIH is therefore an outlier among its peers. This is particularly notable given that the NIH has frequently acknowledged the wastefulness of animal testing.

Accordingly, we respectfully request answers to the following questions:

- Please explain why the NIH awarded a \$1.8 million contract specifically requesting that dog testing be conducted when dog use was obviously scientifically unnecessary and not required by law? What offices and officials at NIH are responsible for reviewing proposed animal use in contracts being awarded?
- Over the past five years, how many dogs and taxpayer dollars have been used for NIH-funded tests to assess the safety and/or efficacy of new drugs for the purpose of FDA submissions?
- Has NIH met with the FDA—as the latter encourages—to discuss ways your agency and its contractors and grantees can reduce drug testing on dogs and seek approval to use alternative testing methods to fulfill regulatory requirements? If so, please detail such discussions.
- What specific efforts and initiatives, if any, is NIH undertaking internally to reduce and replace the use of dogs in taxpayer-funded experiments and testing? Please describe these efforts in detail, including performance metrics and timelines being used to assess progress.
- What incentives does NIH provide to contractors and grantees for avoiding animal testing?

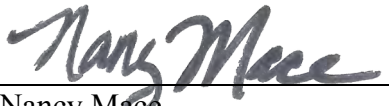
We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

⁸ <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/statement-fda-commissioner-scott-gottlieb-md-efforts-reduce-animal-testing-through-study-aimed>

⁹ <https://www.epa.gov/research/administrator-memo-prioritizing-efforts-reduce-animal-testing-september-10-2019>

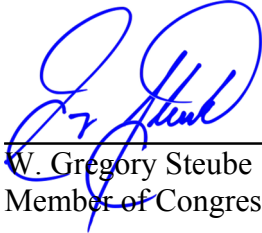
¹⁰ https://www.research.va.gov/programs/animal_research/VA-5-year-plan-for-Sensitive-Species-reduction-elimination.docx



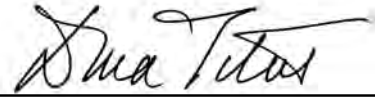
Nancy Mace
Member of Congress



Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress




Dina Titus
Member of Congress



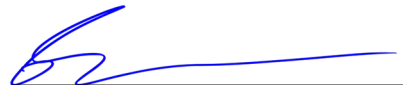
Mike Garcia
Member of Congress



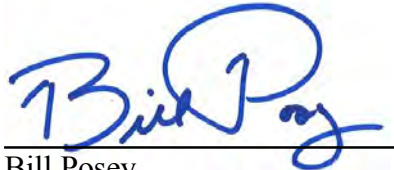
Elissa Slotkin
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Brian Fitzpatrick
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Brian J. Mast
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Bill Posey
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Young Kim
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