



November 3, 2021

Dr. Francis S. Collins
Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Sent via email to: collinsf@mail.nih.gov

Dear Dr. Francis Collins:

I am writing to you because you are the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and therefore have knowledge, oversight, and responsibility of the NIH.

I am cc'ing Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), to whom I wrote a letter on October 26, 2021. Dr. Fauci has yet to respond to our concerns and requests. As a direct report to you, he is just as culpable of funding the unnecessary and unethical, borderline criminal, use of animals in research as you.

I am the President and founder of Beagle Freedom Project, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) animal advocacy and rescue organization based in the United States, whose mission is to end the use of animals in research and rescue, rehabilitate and place the survivors in loving homes, giving them a second chance at life.

I have been inside of animal research laboratories and heard the painful screams of dogs who languish in pain and the silent sounds of those who have no voice because their vocal cords have been cut, a procedure called a cordectomy. The NIH insists it is necessary to reduce noise and minimize the potential for hearing loss in humans.

However, I was told by laboratory workers that this is done so as not to disturb the workers while they perform their "duties," and even worse, it is done so that the dogs cannot communicate with one another.

The beagles are treated as objects, they are given painful tattoos and only known by that very number tattooed in their ear, Federal ID # X. A number you make sure they have so that they have no identity, no name, so that no one outside of the laboratory walls knows they exist.

We have rescued beagles who are so weak from years in a cage that they could not even stand.

But you already know all of this...

We are calling on YOU and your organization, the National Institutes of Health to immediately STOP funding any research that uses animals.

For the last 12 years, you directed the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which consists of 27 Institutes and Centers. In those years, thousands upon thousands of tests were funded through the NIH that included the unnecessary use of animals in preclinical trials and research. Also in your tenure were numerous allegations of cruelty to animals in studies, as well as misappropriation of funding.

The recent investigations of cruelty to animals through NIH, specifically the NIAID, funding and experimentation is shocking to many, so much so that a bipartisan letter of inquiry was sent to Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the NIAID, from members of congress demanding answers. As you know, this is not the first time the NIH has had congress members reach out to you regarding animal experimentation and mistreatment. In 2014, four members of congress raised questions about the ethical justification of the use infant macaques in tests subjecting them to fear, stress, and pain-inducing tests where half were separated from their mothers to assess the effects of maternal deprivation. These tests have been occurring at the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's Laboratory of Comparative Ethology since 1983.

As I am sure you are aware, your very own agency published this very informative article by respected M.D., M.P.H., Aysha Akhtar about The Flaws and Human Harms of Animal Experimentation. Camb Q Healthc Ethics. 2015 Oct; 24(4): 407–419. In short, it states: "...animal experimentation often significantly harms humans through misleading safety studies, potential abandonment of effective therapeutics, and direction of resources away from more effective testing methods. The resulting evidence suggests that the collective harms and costs to humans from animal experimentation outweigh potential benefits and that resources would be better invested in developing human-based testing methods."

The NIH is one of the largest funders of research that uses animals in preclinical trials, however, 51%-89% of preclinical research is faulty and it is estimated that \$14 billion to \$25 billion in animal research is wasted. Herrman, K. (2019) Animal Experimentation: Working Towards a Paradigm Change.

The NIH funds testing on animals to see the effects of different types of addiction for various types of tobacco, for example, conventional cigarettes versus e-cigarettes. Apparently, the NIH is funding these animal experiments to protect governmental agencies from liability, therefore, animals are needlessly being tortured for an unnecessary addictive product.

The list of useless and wasteful testing goes on, and innocent animals suffer.

This needs to end.

As far back as 2004, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) estimated that 92 percent of drugs that pass preclinical tests, including “pivotal” animal tests, fail to proceed to the market.³⁸ More recent analysis suggests that, despite efforts to improve the predictability of animal testing, the failure rate has actually increased and is now closer to 96 percent.³⁹ The main causes of failure are lack of effectiveness and safety problems that were not predicted by animal tests.⁴⁰

If science and wasteful taxpayer spending are not enough to convince you or Dr. Fauci, perhaps legal changes will. Earlier this month, the FDA Modernization Act, a bi-partisan bill, was introduced to end an outdated FDA mandate that experimental drugs must be tested on animals before they are used on humans in clinical trials.

Last but not least, animal testing is unethical. The horrendous, and often painful and distressing pain, both physical and emotional, inflicted upon these innocent animals, who did not ask to be subjected to experimentation, is an embarrassment and shameful.

Beagle Freedom Project has rescued over 3,000 animals from animal testing laboratories since we started in 2010, and I can tell you from personal observation that the psychological trauma is the most overwhelming. Bearing witness to what the NIH and NIAID does to these animals is nothing short of criminal. It is time to end it, and now the world is watching.

As referenced in my letter to Dr. Fauci, if this does not end immediately, Beagle Freedom Project will make sure it becomes criminal and those who perpetrate it will be punished by law.

The evidence is clear: animal testing is outdated, flawed, cruel, unethical and harmful to both animals and humans. We demand that you cease the use of animals in research, end funding to those using animals, and release those animals who are currently in laboratories to Beagle Freedom Project, the leader of rehabilitating and rehoming animals used in research.

I look forward to hearing from you immediately.

My contact info: Shannon Keith, shannon@bfp.org

Yours In Freedom,



Shannon Keith, Esq.
President & Founder, Beagle Freedom Project

cc.

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci
Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)
Sent via email to: anthony.fauci@nih.gov