

SAMPLE GOVERNMENT LETTER

Name of Representative or Senator
Address

Date

Dear Representative or Senator (insert Name),

As your constituent, I urge you to strengthen animal welfare provisions when it comes to companies and organizations using animals in developing new products and in testing the safety of such products. In an age with advancing technologies and an ever-increasing understanding of human anatomy and physiology, it is time to STOP barbaric, outdated testing on animals. Vivisection causes an inconceivable amount of suffering and is unnecessary, with non-animal alternatives being developed everyday.

Clinical human studies, autopsies, epidemiology, human tissue studies, and imaging technology are just a few of the better ways to study human health and disease. More and more physicians report that sophisticated non-animal research methods are more accurate, less expensive, and less time-consuming than traditional animal-based research methods. Patients waiting for helpful drugs and treatments could be spared years of suffering if companies and government agencies would implement the efficient alternatives to animal studies. Fewer accidental deaths caused by drugs and treatments would occur if the more accurate alternatives were used.

Stephen R. Kaufman, MD says this about animal experimentation: "...due to known differences in neuroanatomy between humans and cats...animal models cannot prove hypotheses about humans." Dr. Aysha Akhtar, a neurologist, agrees saying, "...companies are coming up with human based tests...that are going to be far more predictive of what's going to happen to people than any type of animal experiment." Dr. Akhtar points out that **"92% of drugs that are found to be safe and effective in animal experiments are found to be unsafe or ineffective in people. And out of that 8% that do make it to the market, half of them are later recalled."**

With more physicians speaking up for non-animal testing, there are just as many physicians speaking out against vivisection. Dr. Charles Mayo, founder of the Mayo Clinic, stated, "I abhor vivisection. It should at least be curbed. Better, it should be abolished. I know of no achievement through vivisection, no scientific discovery, that could not have been obtained without such barbarism and cruelty. The whole thing is evil" (Quoted by William H. Hendrix, New York Daily News, Mar. 13, 1961).

Enormous physiological variations exist among human and nonhuman animals. In many cases, animal studies do not just hurt nonhuman animals and waste money; they harm and kill humans, too. Countless drugs have been tested on animals and judged safe but had devastating consequences for the humans who used them. A General Accounting Office report, released in May 1990, found that more than half of the prescription drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration between 1976 and 1985 caused side effects that were serious enough to cause the drugs to be withdrawn from the market or labeled differently. All of these drugs had been tested on animals.

Toxicity testing still relies heavily on the use of animals, yet even the EPA now realizes that animal tests do not provide the most useful information for regulating chemicals. The EPA has largely adopted the approach outlined in the National Academy of Sciences report, "Toxicity Testing in the

21st Century: A Vision and a Strategy'. The NAS report outlines a strategy for moving away from animal testing toward cell-based and molecular approaches. These new non-animal methods allow thousands of chemicals and mixtures to be tested in a short period of time--which is not possible to do using animals.

Vivisection is immoral. Non-human animals are not research tools. They are individuals capable of experiencing not only crude emotions like fear, but far more subtle and complex emotions such as love, grief, pride, shame, joy, and loneliness. The cognitive psychologist, Bernard Baars stated, "The basic facts have come home at last. We are not the only conscious creatures on earth."

As a tax-payer, I ask that you ensure new legislation fulfills its potential to promote a future that is not only safer but also more humane. Until then, I will continue to only purchase products from cruelty-free companies and support charities that do not conduct research on animals. I will also continue to inform my friends, family and colleagues how they can make compassionate decisions and ensure no animals are treated as research tools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)

Your Name Printed

Your Contact Information, optional