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COGR Animal Research Statement

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COUNCIL ON GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Animal research has played a vital role in virtually every major medical advance of the last century— for both human and animal health. From the discovery of antibiotics and anesthetics, to the successful development of organ transplants, bypass surgery, and joint replacement – practically every current practice for the prevention, control, cure of disease and relief of pain is based on knowledge attained - directly or indirectly - through research with animals. The essential need for animal research is recognized and supported by scientists, medical societies, and health agencies around the world.

The research community and the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) share an unwavering commitment to the humane care and use of animals in research. The research community strives to achieve and maintain the highest standards for care and use of animals going well beyond the minimums required by law.

The use of animals in research is a controversial subject. Recently, activists who oppose the use of animals in research have engaged in actions designed to intimidate and harass individuals who conduct this research as well as the institutions and sponsors that support it. In response to the increasingly violent actions taken by activists, research institutions, scientific organizations, and academic associations have re-affirmed their commitment to the use of animals in research.

COGR joins with other scientific organizations, research associations and academic institutions in affirming that the rights to free inquiry and expression within the boundaries of applicable laws, regulations and institutional policies are fundamental to academic freedom.

We therefore condemn attempts to intimidate or use violence against any member of the research community exercising those rights. Among these rights is the responsible and humane treatment and use of animals in research that continues to make vital contributions to the health and well being of humans and animals. We reaffirm our obligation to assure that such research meets the highest ethical standards and to safeguard the faculty, trainees, and staff involved in this research.

COGR recommends that research institutions review their procedures for the management of unanticipated events including acts of harassment, intimidation or violence in relation to the use of animals in research and training by their faculty, students and staff.

COGR encourages research institutions to reaffirm their commitment and adherence to the Federal Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training and the regulations and policies that are grounded on these Principles. The Principles recognize the necessary use of animals in the development of knowledge critical for the improvement of the health and well-being of humans as well as other animals. In light of that recognition, the Principles call for:

- Adherence to the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2131 et. seq.) and other applicable Federal laws, guidelines, and policies.
- The use of procedures involving animals that are designed and performed with due consideration of their relevance to human or animal health, the advancement of knowledge, or the good of society.
- The selection of an appropriate species, quality and number animals for a procedure necessary to obtain valid results.
- The proper use of animals, including the avoidance or minimization of discomfort, distress, and pain when consistent with sound scientific practices.
- The use of appropriate sedation, analgesia, or anesthesia in procedures with animals that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress.
- The timely and painless euthanization of animals that would otherwise suffer pain or distress that cannot be relieved at the end of the procedure or, if appropriate, during the procedure.
- The maintenance of living conditions for the animals which are appropriate for their species and contribute to their health and comfort.
- The assurance that investigators and other personnel are appropriately qualified and experienced for conducting procedures on living animals.
- Decisions concerning exceptions to the provisions of these Principles are made by an appropriate review group.

RESOURCES:

Statements on Animal Research:

Association of American Universities (AAU):

http://www.aau.edu/research/STMT_AAU_Animal_Res_10-22-07.pdf

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)

<http://opa.faseb.org/pages/PolicyIssues/animalresearch.htm>

University of California Council of Chancellors

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/16956>

National Institutes of Health Deputy Director

<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/dec2007/oer-14.htm>

<http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/nov2007/od-02.htm>

Crisis Management

National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR)

NABR Crisis Management Guide: The research community's most comprehensive crisis management guide for dealing with an animal activism crisis is available to NABR members at: <http://www.nabrcrisisguide.org/>. Non-NABR members should contact NABR at info@nabr.org or by phone at (202) 857-0540.

Federal Regulations and Policies:

US Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS)
Animal Care – Animal Welfare Act
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/publications_and_reports.shtml

US Department of Health and Human Service/National Institutes of Health (HHS/NIH)
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

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