



FASEB

Federation of American Societies
for Experimental Biology

Representing Over 130,000 Researchers

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9650 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814

June 18, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and
Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

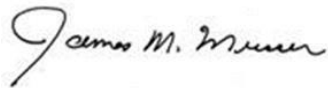
As the largest coalition of biomedical researchers in the United States, representing 29 societies and over 130,000 scientists and engineers, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has grave concerns about language in the FY 2020 House LHHS Appropriations report approved on May 8, 2019 that would severely restrict the use of nonhuman primates by investigators in the National Institutes of Health's (NIH's) intramural research program. The humane use of research animals, including nonhuman primates, is essential to ensure the health and well-being of both humans and animals. Nonhuman primate research represents a very small proportion of the agency's overall research portfolio (0.5 percent of NIH research projects utilizing animals), but these efforts are vital to address human health and prevent disease.

The genetic and physiological similarities between humans and nonhuman primates uniquely position these animals as the best – and in some cases, the only - model to study many diseases and have already proven valuable to the development of treatments and vaccines for diseases including polio and measles. In this regard, a recent NIH clinical trial revealed encouraging results for a cure to sick cell disease after a patient received gene therapy. This work was predicated on research using nonhuman primates.

Nonhuman primate research is also critical to developing new understanding and treatments for infectious diseases, neurological disorders, transplantation, reproductive health and infertility, among others and continues to inform us about HIV/AIDS and neurological disorders such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

Research with nonhuman primates is strictly regulated by the Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Policy, which ensures proper veterinary care, appropriate housing, and the requirement for researchers to consider alternatives to use of animals in research. Nevertheless, the House report would require NIH to spend scarce research dollars justifying the continued need for nonhuman primates. This would delay medical advances and prevent biomedical research from making significant progress to improve public health, which all Americans deserve. We strongly urge you refrain from including such language in the FY2020 Senate LHHS Appropriations bill.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James M. Musser". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Respectfully,".

James M. Musser, MD, PhD
FASEB President