

February 14, 2018

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing on behalf of approximately 2.1 million researchers, members, and employees to bring to your attention the important role airline transportation plays in ensuring laboratory animals are available for lifesaving biomedical research and to request you revisit your company's policy regarding the shipment of all species of research animals. Your company's commitment to transporting laboratory animals is crucial to finding treatments and cures for diseases afflicting millions of people worldwide. We ask that you continue transporting research animals allowing lifesaving research around the world to continue.

The air transportation of animals for medical research is not new. Animals have been transported by air since the early 1930's. Unfortunately, due to perceived pressure from animal rights extremists seeking to end the use of all animals in biomedical research, some airlines no longer accept shipments of animal models for research. We believe this decision is misguided and may have catastrophic consequences to health worldwide for both humans and animals. However, some airlines have taken the opposite approach and have publicly stated their support for facilitating ongoing medical research. We respectfully request your airline review its policies regarding shipment of animal models and consider publishing a similar statement of support.

Scientific and medical research with animals, whether transgenic mice or non-human primates, is essential to the development of medications, treatments, preventions and cures for diseases affecting adults, children and animals around the world. Because of the genetic similarities of animals and people, animals are invaluable models for human diseases and are integral to the study of currently incurable diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, HIV/AIDS and malaria, which together affect more than 280 million people worldwide. Research with animals is currently underway for the development of new drugs to cure or treat such diseases as cancer, cystic fibrosis, tuberculosis, and cardiovascular disease to name a few.

The essential role of animals in lifesaving research is an indisputable fact. Almost every major medical advance in the last century was made possible by carefully regulated, humane animal research. For example, the medicines developed and in use today include vaccines against life-threatening illnesses

such as typhus, yellow fever and polio. These vaccines have essentially eradicated these diseases in the US and Western Europe and provide the tools for eradicating them elsewhere in the world. But there is much research yet to be done and all of it will depend in some way on animals.

Be assured that animal research and testing for the development of new medicines are not only required in many cases by the Food and Drug Administration in the United States, but are also strictly regulated by governing authorities in the US, the EU and other countries. Responsible research with animals is a moral and ethical societal obligation to ensure protection of humans and animals from unknown and unacceptable health risks.

Access to safe, fast and reliable modes of transportation for these animals is essential to the mission of advancing global medical and scientific progress. By carrying these animals, your company plays a significant role in the quest to end human suffering and premature death, which threaten so much of the world's population.

Moreover, air transportation of animals not only promotes good research; it also promotes good animal welfare. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has stated, "In today's modern world, carriage of live animals by air is considered the most humane and expedient method of transportation over long distances." IATA ensures that both safety and animal welfare are addressed in all regulatory issues pertaining to transportation of live animals by air.

Thousands of research programs at institutions worldwide are dependent on the shipment of laboratory animals. People at public and private universities, medical and veterinary schools, teaching hospitals, voluntary health agencies, and professional societies are, of course, customers of your airline. These organizations along with biotechnology companies, pharmaceutical companies and contract research organizations spend billions of dollars with the airline industry each year on the shipment of laboratory samples, and medicines and on passenger tickets.

We ask you to continue conducting your business with the greater good in mind, rather than capitulating to the opinions of a few vocal animal rights extremists who are not representative of the public at large. A decision to ship research animals doesn't just promote good science, but also promotes a healthy relationship between your airline and all of us, the customers, who rely on the benefits of medical research.

Sincerely,

