May 9, 2018

Senator Dominick J. Ruggerio  Senator Michael J. McCaffrey
President of the Senate  Senate Majority Leader
State of Rhode Island General Assembly  State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street,  82 Smith Street,
Providence, RI 02903  Providence, RI 02903

Senator V. Susan Sosnowski
Chairperson, Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street,
Providence, RI 02903

Dear President Ruggerio, Majority Leader McCaffrey, and Chairperson Sosnowski:

The National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony to the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee in opposition to H. 7414.

NABR, and its more than 360 member institutions and their hundreds-of-thousands of employees who engage in biomedical research with animal models, writes to express concerns with H. 7414. NABR members include universities, medical and veterinary schools, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies and other research-intensive programs, including medical research centers in the state of Rhode Island, that are dedicated to the development of diagnostics, treatments and cures for animals and humans. Biomedical research projects involving animals are governed by numerous local, state and federal laws, regulations and guidelines, and continue to yield invaluable data in the development of new therapies to treat disease. Cancer therapies, vaccines, organ transplants, cardiovascular surgeries, medications, and many other innovations have been developed through research conducted at our member institutions.

Legislation like H. 7414 is a solution in search of a nonexistent problem. The adoption of research animals is not a new concept for biomedical research. The majority of research programs in the United States already conduct adoption programs with incredible success. It is important to note that these animals have been specifically bred for research and are not typical house pets. They require specialized care and attention, beyond those of the common household pet, and every effort is made to ensure proper acclimatization and evaluation before placement in post-research homes. Those efforts are best directed by the expert staff veterinarians charged with the animals’ care at the medical research center. The plans organized by research programs for adoption include careful and strict guidelines for evaluating potential adoptive homes, something that private shelters or adoption organizations are often not equipped or trained to do.

H. 7414, simply put, is misguided and unnecessary. Contrasted with the numbers of un-adopted Rhode Island shelter pets that may be euthanized every year because homes can’t be found for them, this legislation would apply to a miniscule number of dogs and cats in vet tech programs in
the state. Furthermore, adoption of research dogs and cats is not as straightforward as it may first appear. The animals that are bred for research require knowledge, patience and consistency to ensure they thrive in post-research homes, and if hastily placed in an improper setting, they may end up homeless or in the shelter system facing euthanasia. According to FY16 census information obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), a total of 25 dogs were involved in teaching protocols in the state of Rhode Island. Closer examination of these statistics reveals that these dogs were in academic programs, and we estimate that each of these animals counted by the USDA were used in veterinary technician training programs where students learn vital front-line skills like tooth cleaning, diagnostic testing, nail trimming, vaccinations, surgical preparation, anesthesiology, assisting in surgeries, and more. Vet tech training programs provide a valuable service as they conduct necessary medical care, including vaccinations and spay and neutering, to prepare dogs and cats for adoption in shelters. With this examination of the data, the small number of animals impacted by H. 7414 seriously begs the question about whether the proposed legislation amounts to nothing more than a public relations victory for animal activist groups. Until Rhode Island’s shelters are empty and every adoption-worthy shelter animal is placed in its forever home, it would be prudent to direct legislative efforts towards the significantly larger number of homeless animals at municipal and state shelters.

Legislation similar to H. 7414 failed to pass in Rhode Island last year and has been introduced in other states as part of a campaign by animal rights activists opposed to all animal research. Due in part to concerns expressed by NABR and leading research universities, similar bills also failed to pass in Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, North Dakota, and Texas last year. A similar bill failed to pass in Indiana earlier this year. Those who are promoting this legislation have used animals adopted from research programs as public relations props to promote false claims that animal research is cruel and unnecessary. Shannon Keith, president and founder of the Beagle Freedom Project (BFP), now known as Rescue + Freedom Project (R+FP), wrote an op-ed to the Seattle Times where she called such studies “archaic” and stated that they are “…bad for people, too.”

That argument could not be further from the truth as the preponderance of the evidence throughout the history of medical advancement demonstrates otherwise. As you will see in the attached document, 22 of the top 25 most prescribed medications in America were brought to fruition thanks to research with dogs. In fact, of the 108 Nobel Prizes in physiology or medicine, 96 were made possible by animal research.

Passage of this legislation represents a slippery slope that would serve to further restrict an already overly-burdened research community. The proponents of these bills apparently do not intend to limit their focus to legislation requiring dog and cat adoption. Anti-research activists have expressed an interest in requiring research facilities to adopt out additional research species, such as rabbits, guinea pigs, goats, pigs, rats, mice and even goldfish. H. 7414 will likely provide fertile ground for future, more onerous amendments seeking to place additional burdens on lifesaving and life-improving research for both humans and animals. After a failed attempt at passage in Illinois, secondary legislation was introduced seeking duplicative state reporting requirements for any research study involving dogs or cats. The Illinois legislature ultimately failed to pass that bill. The sponsor of the failed House bill in Maryland referenced the true intent of the legislation when he told the local media, “If we can’t get any reporting on what they’re doing, then maybe we just need to prohibit the practice.”

The sponsor, in this instance, was suggesting that he would support a

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1 http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/uw-animal-lab-represents-archaic-abusive-practice/
3 https://bressearch.org/medical-advances/nobel-prizes/
whole sale ban on all animal research.

Despite efforts to smear the reputations of responsible research organizations, the research community strictly adheres to the principles of refining procedures, reducing the number of animals required in studies and replacing animal models where feasible; decisions best made by veterinary and scientific experts, not animal rights groups. In fact, inaccurate information has been circulated by BFP/R+FP publicly claiming in the attached one-pager that “research dogs and cats are summarily euthanized at the end of the testing even if they are healthy.” This is a preposterously false assertion. Veterinarians take their roles as caretakers of animals very seriously and simply do not euthanize healthy animals unless there is a scientific or medical necessity.

Research programs at venerable research institutions in Rhode Island, including Brown University, the University of Rhode Island, and the VA medical center are vital to scientific discovery and the state should be justifiably proud. Private and public research are also substantial economic drivers in the state. In total, 14,972 jobs are supported by the biomedical sector and it has a $4.4 billion economic output\(^5\). A total of $1,291,000,000 in research and development is invested in Rhode Island\(^6\). Legislative proposals like H. 7414 create an anti-research climate which may result in biomedical research programs looking to other states in New England for more supportive climates for their lifesaving research endeavors.

NABR appreciates and understands the importance of re-homing animals no longer needed in lifesaving and life-enhancing biomedical research and supports the already existing and effective framework practiced nationwide by research institutions; therefore, NABR opposes H. 7414.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to submit our concerns to the committee.

Sincerely,

Matthew R. Bailey
President
NABR

\(^5\) https://www.researchamerica.org/sites/default/files/Innovation%26RI_2017_2.pdf
\(^6\) https://www.researchamerica.org/advocacy-action/research/research-funding-and-economic-impact-funding-states/rhode-island
RESEARCH DOG & CAT ADOPTIONS ACT

This is a simple, commonsense, and compassionate proposal to help rescue dogs and cats from Illinois research laboratories. The legislation would facilitate a relationship between laboratories that use dogs and cats for research purposes and registered non-profit animal rescue organizations so that when the animals are no longer needed they can be placed up for public adoption.

THE BILL:
New Act
Creates the Research Dogs and Cats Adoption Act. Provides that a research facility, after the completion of any research involving a dog or cat, shall assess the health of the dog or cat and determine whether it is suitable for adoption. Provides that a research facility shall make reasonable efforts to offer for adoption a dog or cat determined to be suitable. Provides that a research facility that provides dogs or cats to an animal adoption organization is immune from any civil liability under the Act except for willful or wanton misconduct. Requires research facilities to have a research facility adoption policy made available on the facility's website.

DEFICIENCY OF LAW

The law is needed because there exists no guideline or policy covering this aspect of laboratory animal welfare. Current federal and state legislation offers an array of regulations concerning the research animal's bedding, food, water access, enrichment devices, and pain management. All aspects of a research animal's life is subject to policy prescriptions except for what happens to the animal after the research ends.

Sadly many research dogs and cats are summarily euthanized at the end of the testing even if they are healthy. If a dog or cat is adopted it is usually at the individual discretion and volunteer time of a laboratory worker. There exists no mechanism for citizens of Illinois to adopt one these dogs or cats for which their tax-dollars paid for.

LEGISLATIVE IMPACT

Similar legislation has already passed in Connecticut, California, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Hawaii, New Jersey, Massachusetts and is pending in several other states.

SUPPORT THE ‘RIGHT TO RESCUE’
IMPORTANT FACTS

The laws covering the care and use of animals in laboratories are Health Research Extension Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-158), The Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training, The Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, and The American Veterinary Medical Association Guideline for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2013 Edition. None of these laws address opportunities to adopt healthy post-research animals.

According to the latest USDA APHIS filings there were roughly 3,196 dogs and 714 cats were used in experiments in 21 Illinois based facilities. While one facility might have a post-experiment adoption program on occasion, it is voluntary and tenuous. At any point new management could terminate the program. This bill will simply ensure its continuing success and compel others, if they begin to use animals in research, to implement them. 96% of the dogs used in research laboratories are beagles. Beagles are the breed of choice for the same personality traits that make them great family additions, they are docile, people-pleasing, forgiving, and easy to care for.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES:

- This bill is an opportunity to bridge the differences between reasonable people over the controversial issue of animal testing. It allows everyone to work together for the sake of helping these dogs and cats.
- This bill waives all liability from the research laboratory and offers them protection with complete confidentiality if they so choose.
- This bill simply asks that Illinois laboratories, especially those that taxpayer financed, make a good faith effort at contacting relevant local animal rescue organizations to adopt these animals out. If those organizations cannot place the dog or cat, the research laboratory is free to euthanize, as they would have otherwise.

This bill would allow Illinois to demonstrate that it adheres to the gold standard for research ethics and animal welfare.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES NOT DO:

- This bill does not regulate or interfere with the research process.
- This bill leaves the discretion to the research professionals to determine if a dog or cat is needed for additional studies or is healthy enough for adoption.
- This bill does not criticize the use of animals in research.
- This bill does not force the labs to release sick, injured, or suffering animals.
- This bill does not require the research laboratory to assume any extra costs, provide transportation, veterinary care, or screening of applicants.

Beagle Freedom Project is proud to support this legislation. As the leading research animal rescue and advocacy organization in the country it has successfully demonstrated that rescued research animals are no different than the dogs or cats countless millions of Americans share their homes with. Beagles are the breed of choice for experiments because of they gentle, docile nature - the same great qualities that make them wonderful family companions.

After all these animals endure for our academic curiosities they deserve a chance at a life, at liberation, and at love.

www.bfp.org
The Animal Research Behind The Top 25 Most Prescribed Drugs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Drug Usage</th>
<th>Species</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Synthroid</td>
<td>Enlarged thyroid; hypothyroidism</td>
<td>Rats, Dogs, Mice</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Crestor</td>
<td>High cholesterol</td>
<td>Rats, Beagle dogs, Mice, Cats, Cynomolgus monkeys, Rabbits</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Nexium</td>
<td>Heartburn; Acid Reflux</td>
<td>Rats, Beagle dogs, Rabbits, Mice</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ventolin HFA</td>
<td>Bronchospasm</td>
<td>Rats, Beagle dogs, New Zealand white rabbits</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Advair Diskus</td>
<td>Asthma; COPD Flare-ups</td>
<td>Rats, Dogs, Mice, Rabbits, Guinea pigs, Monkeys, Hamsters</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Diovan</td>
<td>High Blood Pressure</td>
<td>Rats, Mice, Rabbits, Marmosets</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Lantus Solostar</td>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>Rats, Beagle Dogs, Rabbits, Guinea Pigs</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Cymbalta</td>
<td>Fibromyalgia; Major Depressive &amp; General Anxiety Disorders</td>
<td>Mice, Rats, Rabbits, Dogs</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Vyvanse</td>
<td>ADHD; Severe binge eating (adults)</td>
<td>Rats, Guinea Pigs, Beagle Dogs</td>
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<td>Lyrica</td>
<td>Fibromyalgia; Epilepsy</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Spiriva Handihaler</td>
<td>COPD (including Bronchitis &amp; Emphysema)</td>
<td>Mice, Rats, Rabbits, Dogs</td>
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<td>Lantus</td>
<td>Types 1 &amp; 2 Diabetes</td>
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<td>Celebrex</td>
<td>Arthritis; Ankylosing Spondylitis</td>
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<td>Schizophrenia &amp; Bipolar Disorder</td>
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<td>Namenda</td>
<td>Moderate to Severe Dementia</td>
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<td>Seasonal/Year Round Allergies</td>
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<td>Prevent Asthma Attacks</td>
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<td>Oxycontin</td>
<td>Long lasting, Moderate to Severe Pain</td>
<td>Rats, Rabbits</td>
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References

(http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/drugsatfda/index.cfm)