



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 28, 2023

To: House Government and Operations Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Animal Testing and Research - Human-Relevant Research Funding and Animal Testing and Research Licensure – 626 - Support

Chair Pena- Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, my name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Health and Government Operations Committee vote favorably for Animal Testing and Research - Human-Relevant Research Funding and Animal Testing and Research Licensure – HB 626.

This bill would establish the Human–Relevant Research Fund. The purpose of the fund is to promote state-funded research through grants and loans to public and private entities in Maryland to develop human-relevant alternatives to using animals in medical and product testing and research.

Laboratory testing on animals is painful, debilitating, and cruel. A Pew Research Center poll found that 52% of U.S. adults oppose the use of animals in scientific research. The smaller percentage of the population that still accepts animal experimentation often does so only because it believes it to be necessary for medical progress. In an article published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, however, researchers found that medical treatments developed on animals often **do not** translate to humans. The study also warned patients and physicians to be cautious about extrapolating the findings of prominent animal research to the care of human disease. What we now know is that there are many alternatives to using animals in research.

This is an opportunity for Maryland to invest in an emerging scientific area that will continue grow and help end this abusive practice. Maryland already has a niche in the biomedical and biotech industries with numerous famous hospitals and universities. This Fund would not only provide jobs for Marylanders utilizing the most advanced scientific models for research, but also it would save animals from unnecessary suffering in tests that have been deemed less reliable than computer simulations and synthetic materials testing.

Let's Make Maryland a Leader in Finding Alternatives to Animals in Research.

Passing this bill is a win-win-win. It is a win for animals, a win for medical research, and a win for Maryland's economy.

In closing, I would like to thank Delegate Cullison for her sponsorship of HB 626 and ask the committee to give this bill a favorable report.