

**HB 626 – Animal Testing and Research-Human-Relevant Research Funding and Animal Testing and Research Licensure**

**House Health and Government Operations Committee**

**February 28, 2023**

Good Afternoon, Chair Pena Melnyk and Vice Chair Kelly and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. My name is Greg Ball, Vice President for Research for the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). As amended, we support the overall concept of establishing the Human-Relevant Research Fund to provide additional resources to develop alternatives to using nonhuman animals in medical and product testing and research.

While animal-based research is necessary for the development of lifesaving and life altering treatments for people and animals, UMB and UMCP holds firm to the belief that we have an ethical and moral responsibility to provide quality, compassionate and humane treatment of all our animals. We also recognize that our responsibility to our animals does not end when a research project concludes.

All laboratory animal work at UMB and UMCP must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act, *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*, and other federal regulations. Researchers consider all alternatives to procedures by employing appropriate, protocol specific search strategies, regardless of species. They are guided by the approach of the Three Rs which represents a practical method for implementation referring to replacement, refinement, and reduction when deciding to use animals in research and in designing humane animal research studies. In terms of justifying the use of an animal model, the principal investigator must submit to the IACUC whether other alternatives (e.g. cell culture, computer/modeling/simulation) to animal usage exist and why they are not feasible for this particular research protocol.

We adhere to all federal regulations, are inspected once a year, have internal protocol measures and oversight in place and provide an annual report to the USDA as a registered research facility.

It is important to remember that animal-based research has resulted in groundbreaking discoveries that have helped to save or improve the lives of countless individuals in the United States and throughout the world. At UMB we have carried out major life saving medical research using animal models including the development of aromatase inhibitors for the treatment of breast cancer. In addition, animal-based research carried out by our own Shock Trauma has led to major advances in life saving procedures such as the use of hypothermia to improve the survival of non-trauma cardiac arrest patients. Last year, University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) faculty at the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), together known as the University of Maryland Medicine were able to successfully transplant a modified pig heart into an adult human with end-stage heart disease. Recently, UMCP's researchers were able to develop an inhalable coronavirus vaccine making it safe for children and the immunocompromised after conducting animal trials. More broadly, animal-based research

has resulted in treatments for asthma, dementia, epilepsy, diabetes, high blood pressure, and numerous other medical conditions. We continue to see the benefits of animal-based research in our everyday lives and the lives of animals.