

Testimony for the House Health and Government Operations Committee
February 16, 2021
SB 611 - Public Health - Prohibition on Testing Cosmetics on Animals

FAVORABLE

To Chair Pendergass, Vice Chair Peña-Melnyk, and Committee members,

My name is Onyinye Alheri and I am a resident of Maryland's 40th legislative district. I am writing to express strong support of SB 611.

As an animal lover and environmentalist I must express how violent, ineffective and unnecessary animal testing is. It is simply bad science which disrespects the lives and dignity of both animals and humans. Each year precious resources are wasted infecting animals with diseases that they would never normally contract. Furthermore there is a solid collection of scientific evidence which demonstrates that animal experiments harm humans. This is because most experiments on animals are not relevant to human health and beauty, do not contribute meaningfully to scientific advancements, and are undertaken simply out of cruel curiosity with no promise for curing human illnesses or addressing human needs/desires.

Because animal tests are so unreliable, they make human trials even more risky. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has noted that 95 percent of all products that are shown to be safe and effective in animal tests fail in human trials because they do not work or are dangerous. And of the small percentage of products approved for human use, 50% end up being relabeled or recalled because of harmful side effects that were not identified in animal tests.

Animal experimentation wastes billions of dollars annually (including 40 percent of all research funding from the National Institutes of Health), and nearly \$3 trillion is spent on caring for the sick animals after they have been experimented on.

Animals rarely serve as good models for the human body. Human clinical and epidemiological studies, human tissue- and cell-based research methods, cadavers, sophisticated high-fidelity human-patient simulators, and computational models are more reliable, more precise, less expensive, and more humane [alternatives](#) to experiments on animals. Progressive scientists have used human brain cells to develop a model "microbrain," which can be used to study tumors, as well as artificial skin and bone marrow. We can now test skin irritation using reconstructed human tissues, produce and test vaccines using human tissues, and perform pregnancy tests using blood samples instead of killing rabbits.

In this day and age there is no reason to continue the archaic and harmful practice of animal experimentation. Let us move forward with humane and effective alternatives. Thank you all again for reading my testimony and special thanks to Delegate Hill for your efforts in moving this humane bill forward.

Best,

Onyinye Alheri
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References:

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2. Answers to Common Arguments for Animal Testing.
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