



March 27th, 2025

The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment
2 West-Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

BIOQUAL Inc. urges an unfavorable report on SB 535 – Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Licensing and Regulation, and Companion bill SB 536.

BIOQUAL Inc. (BIOQUAL), a Maryland based Contract Research Organization founded in 1981, has long been engaged in development of in-vivo testing programs and has been extensively involved in research efforts to develop vaccines and therapies against emerging diseases including AIDS, Hepatitis, Influenza, Zika, Chikungunya and many others. The company played a vital role in COVID-19 research and in the development of successful vaccines and therapies against the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The use of animals in this research was essential to the rapid development of the COVID-19 vaccines that are estimated to have saved millions of lives worldwide (ref. Lancet Infect Dis 2022; 22: 1293-302, June 23, 2022; [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099\(22\)00320-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(22)00320-6)). Most recently, the company has been engaged with the response and mitigation efforts against the emerging H5N1 influenza outbreak.

Animal models are a necessary component of BIOQUAL's mission to provide innovative research support for improved global health. BIOQUAL is a USDA Registered Class R Research Facility, holds an Assurance with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), and is an Accredited institution with the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC). Further, to ensure ethical and human treatment, BIOQUAL is committed to:

- Maintaining the highest standards of animal care and use through a collaborative approach involving veterinarians, scientists, and animal support staff.
- Incorporating the 3Rs of animal research (Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement) to constantly seek to improve our program of animal care.
- Having a duly constituted Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) that is qualified through the experience and expertise of its members to ensure that all research and teaching protocols using live vertebrate animals are designed and performed in a humane manner that complies with all applicable laws, policies, and guidelines, and
- Fostering a culture of recognition and appreciation for the role of animals in research for all staff.

BIOQUAL, Inc. strongly supports ethical animal research practices and the principles of animal welfare; however, SB 535 and 536 fail to offer meaningful improvements while imposing substantial regulatory burdens on Maryland's research sector. The bills create redundant oversight, increases costs, delay scientific progress, and weaken Maryland's position as a leading hub for life sciences and biomedical research. For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report on Senate bills 535 and 536.