

Favorable SB0536 - Physicians Committee - 2-24-202

Uploaded by: Andrew Binovi

Position: FAV

February 25, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Favorable SB0536 – “Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation”

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and our members in Maryland, I respectfully submit this letter of support for SB0536, which would mandate the use of nonanimal methods in product testing at private facilities and put limitations on the use of dogs and cats, among other provisions.

Increasingly, it is recognized across research and testing sectors that animals are not good surrogates for humans. Over 85% of Americans recently polled agreed that animal-based experiments should be phased out in support of methods that do not use animals.¹ Animal research and testing often does not translate to humans because there are insurmountable species differences in anatomy, physiology, lifespan, disease characteristics, and more.² Maryland should be a national leader in facilitating and encouraging the use of more effective human-based approaches.

SB0536 will lead towards the broader use and acceptance of innovative and more informative human-based approaches to product testing. These methods, like organs on chips, reconstructed human tissues, and sophisticated computer models have existed for some time but unfortunately public policy lags behind in favor of unreliable and ethically problematic animal testing.

The Physicians Committee asks the Committee to advance SB0536 and encourages all members of the Senate to support this legislation. Thank you for your attention to this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Andrew Binovi, MPP
Director of Government Affairs,
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

¹ Morning Consult, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. U.S. Gen Pop Beliefs on Animal Testing; 2024. Accessed February 24, 2025. <https://pcrm.widen.net/s/qzfxth7bw/animal-testing-survey>.

² Pound P, Ritskes-Hoitinga M. Is it possible to overcome issues of external validity in preclinical animal research? Why most animal models are bound to fail. *J Transl Med*. 2018;16(1):304. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12967-018-1678-1>.

MD SB 536_FAVORABLE_Conlee Humane World.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathleen Conlee

Position: FAV

**Testimony in Support of SB 536
Presented to the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 27, 2025
By Kathleen Conlee, Vice President, Animal Research Issues
Humane World for Animals**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony on behalf of Humane World for Animals, formerly called the Humane Society of the United States, and our Maryland members and supporters urging a favorable report of SB 536. This important legislation creates a requirement that product testing facilities utilize available non-animal methods instead of traditional animal tests when they are available and provides protections for dogs and cats used in private animal research facilities in the state of Maryland.

Specifically, SB 536:

- Mandates the use of non-animal methods when they are available and provide equivalent or superior scientific information to assess the safety of products such as household cleaners, drugs, pesticides, cosmetics, vaccines and chemical substances.
- Prohibits the use of dogs or cats to assess the safety of products like pesticides and food additives when not federally required. Also requires drug developers to request a meeting with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) prior to conducting a dog test.
- Bans certain cruel research practices such as devocalization and obtaining dogs and cats from shelters as well as mandating humane euthanasia.
- Requires all private facilities using animals in research and testing to annually report the number of animals used, the number of dogs and cats adopted into homes after their time in research has ended and for product testing facilities to provide data on their use of animal methods and non-animal alternatives.

Alternatives Mandate

SB 536 requires product testing facilities to use test methods that replace animal testing when they are available and provide information of equivalent or better scientific quality and relevance. It also requires reporting on the use of traditional animal methods and alternatives. This provision applies to products such as cosmetics, household cleaners, drugs, pesticides and industrial chemicals. The provision does not prohibit the use of animal tests to comply with specific requirements of state or federal agencies.

While animal testing will always have limitations, non-animal testing strategies can more closely mimic how the human body responds to drugs and chemical substances. The National Toxicology Program Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods provides a list of more than 100 methods or guidance documents that completely replace or reduce animal use

that are accepted by U.S. agencies on its website.¹ As just one example from this list, comprehensive studies have shown that non-animal approaches to test chemicals for the likelihood of causing skin allergies are more reliable predictors of human outcomes than the typical animal test methods.²

Unlike traditional animal test methods, sophisticated non-animal approaches to toxicity testing will only continue to improve. The future of non-animal science includes “Organs-on-chips,” which are tiny 3D chips created from human cells that look and function like miniature human organs. Organs-on-chips are used to determine how human systems respond to different drugs or chemicals and to find out exactly what happens during infection or disease. Several organs, representing heart, liver, lungs or kidneys, for example, can be linked together through a “microfluidic” circulatory system to create an integrated “human-on-a-chip” model that lets researchers assess multi-organ responses.³

Last session, Maryland became the first state in the nation to prioritize the development of human-relevant research by establishing a dedicated fund to provide grants to scientists in the state developing these non-animal technologies. SB 536 will ensure that private companies in Maryland are utilizing these new non-animal testing strategies as soon as they are approved for use, thus ensuring increased impact of Maryland’s existing laws.

Additional protection for dogs and cats

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, an average of nearly 300 dogs per year were used in a private Maryland research facility over the most recent three years of available data. SB 536 contains several provisions to provide additional protection for dogs and cats used in research and testing including prohibiting the use of dogs and cats in certain toxicity testing, preventing devocalization, requiring humane euthanasia and clarifying that pound seizure (the taking of dogs/cats from shelters) is prohibited in the state. It also requires private research facilities to proactively work to reduce and replace the use of these animals.

Dog tests do not ensure human safety and have scientific limitations that will never improve. Comprehensive scientific analysis reveals that dogs are “highly inconsistent predictors of toxic responses in humans” and suggests that predictions of toxicity based on canine data are little better than those obtained through tossing a coin. The study concludes that “the preclinical testing of pharmaceuticals in dogs cannot currently be justified on scientific or ethical grounds.”⁴ The lack of scientific justification for toxicity testing on dogs to predict human impacts deems such tests unnecessary. SB 536 prohibits the use of dogs for toxicity testing that are not specifically required by federal law including for chemicals and food additives. It also requires drug companies to ensure that conducting tests on dogs is deemed necessary by the FDA before using them.

Devocalization, or ventriculocordectomy, is the surgical removal of part or most of an animal’s vocal cords. When performed on dogs or cats it prevents them from barking or meowing. Dogs and cats can suffer physical consequences as a result of devocalization including nerve damage, infection, chronic coughing and aspiration pneumonia. Aside from such physical problems, devocalized dogs

¹ NTP Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods (NICEATM) Alternative Methods Accepted by U.S. Agencies. (2023, Feb 23). Retrieved from: <https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/whatwestudy/niceatm/accept-methods/index.html>

² Kleinstreuer NC et al., Non-animal methods to predict skin sensitization (II): an assessment of defined approaches. 2018 Critical Reviews in Toxicology, 48:5, 359-374, doi: 10.1080/10408444.2018.1429386

³ National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. Meet Chip. (2022, March 18). Retrieved from: <https://ncats.nih.gov/tissuechip/chip>

⁴ Bailey et al., “An Analysis of the Use of Dogs in Predicting Human Toxicology and Drug Safety.” (2013).

and cats have a decreased ability to communicate, creating psychological harm.⁵ SB 536 prohibits private research facilities from performing devocalization surgery on dogs and cats or using a dog or cat that has received these procedures.

SB 536 also requires that dogs and cats in private research facilities only be euthanized through the injection of sodium pentobarbital by, or under the supervision of, a licensed veterinarian. Sodium pentobarbital is considered the most humane method for euthanasia of dogs and cats⁶ and is considered the preferred method for companion dogs and cats according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.⁷

In addition, SB 536 provides clarification that dogs and cats from random sources (of unknown origin, such as flea markets, auctions or animal shelters) should never be used for research and testing in private Maryland facilities. In 2013, the National Institutes of Health released a policy that it will no longer fund research that involves dogs from random source Class B dealers.⁸ A similar policy regarding cats was adopted in 2012.⁹ From a scientific research point of view, random source dogs and cats used for experimentation have not had standardized care and upbringing, and consequently have an uncertain medical history and temperament for living in an institutional setting. These circumstances make them particularly poor candidates for experiments.

Transparency

In the United States, the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires research facilities to annually report the number of warm-blooded animals used in research and testing. Unfortunately, the AWA specifically excludes birds, rats and mice bred for use in research as well as commonly used cold-blooded species such as fish, which represent the vast majority of animals used in research and testing (up to 99%), meaning that research facilities are not required to report how many of these animals are being used. SB 536 will give a more complete picture of how many animals are actually being used in Maryland by requiring private research facilities to report annually on their use of all animals. It also requires reporting on the number of alternative test methods used and the number of dogs and cats that were released for adoption into loving homes.

Scientific limitations of animal testing

The continued use of animal models for human disease or to assess the possible impact of substances on the human body carries serious scientific limitations. Different species can respond differently when exposed to the same drugs or chemicals. Consequently, results from animal tests may not be relevant to humans, under- or over-estimating real world health hazards. It should not be surprising, therefore, that more than 90% of human drugs fail during clinical trials¹⁰ after having

⁵ Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association. Devocalization Fact Sheet. (n.d.) Retrieved from: <https://www.hsvma.org/assets/pdfs/devocalization-facts.pdf>

⁶ World Society for the Protection of Animals. Methods for the euthanasia of dogs and cats: comparison and recommendations. (n.d.) Retrieved from: https://caninerabiesblueprint.org/IMG/pdf/Link72_Euthanasia_WSPA.pdf

⁷ American Veterinary Medical Association. AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals: 2020 Edition. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Guidelines-on-Euthanasia-2020.pdf>

⁸ National Institutes of Health. Notice Regarding NIH Plan to Transition from Use of USDA Class B Dogs to Other Legal Sources. NOT-OD-14-034. (2013, December 17). Retrieved from: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-14-034.html>

⁹ National Institutes of Health. Notice Regarding NIH plan to Transition from use of USDA Class B Cats to Other Legal Sources. NOT-OD-12-049. (2012, February 8). Retrieved from: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-12-049.html>

¹⁰ National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences. About New Therapeutic Uses. (2022, March 23). Retrieved from: <https://ncats.nih.gov/ntu/about>

completed extensive animal studies. These failures are due to unexpected toxicity in human patients or lack of efficacy (whether it is safe and/or effective). In addition, animals do not always develop the same diseases as humans, or the impact of the disease varies greatly by species. Often treatments that seem incredibly promising in animal models turn out to not be effective in treating human diseases. SB 536 encourages private research facilities to move away from outdated animal testing and instead use more human-relevant non-animal methods.

Strong public support

A YouGov Blue poll conducted in 2023 demonstrates that Maryland voters strongly support efforts to limit animal use in research and testing, the development of non-animal methods and increased transparency.

- Seventy-nine percent of Maryland voters support state investment in research and development techniques that don't require animal testing, with only 13 percent opposed.
- Sixty-nine percent support prohibiting animal testing for non-medical reasons, with 21 percent opposed.
- Seventy-two percent support banning animal testing to determine product toxicity, with 22 percent opposed.
- Eighty percent of Maryland voters support requiring the disclosure of the number of animals used in animal testing and the purpose of the testing, a proposal only 12 percent of voters oppose.
- Finally, voters strongly support holding animal research institutions accountable, with 82 percent supporting a proposal to bar institutions with a record of repeated violations of animal welfare laws from receiving state funds for continued research.

Humane World for Animals urges a favorable report on SB 536.

Thank you,



Kathleen Conlee
Vice President, Animal Research Issues
Humane World for Animals

KH-EEE-HB5036.pdf

Uploaded by: Kimberly Hayes

Position: FAV

Testimony on HB 0536 - Favorable
HB 0536 – Research Facilities and Animal Testing –Regulation

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 27, 2025

Dear Honorable Chair Brian Feldman, Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Kim Hayes, resident of Frederick MD, offers a **favorable** testimony in support of **HB 0536 – Research Facilities and Animal Testing – Regulation**

Among other regulations proposed, I understand this bill is an effort to prevent cruel testing methods, including devocalization procedures. I have to admit I was horrified to learn of this practice. I have personally undergone a highly painful surgical procedure without anesthesia, and in the process, I was amazed to learn that vocalizing my pain allowed that pain to pass through and out of me. To take that ability away from a living being who is experiencing pain is unthinkable to me and must not be allowed.

I don't believe we should ever inflict pain and suffering on another living being, but I guess we are working within the context of animal testing. So, I am in full support of any measure of improvement which this bill provides for these poor souls who deserve our protection, not mistreatment.

I (Kim Hayes) urge the committee to provide a favorable report on HB 0536.

SB 536

Uploaded by: Lisa Radov

Position: FAV



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

**PO Box 10411
BALTIMORE, MD 21209**

February 27, 2025

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation – SB 536 – Support

Chair Feldman, Vice- Chair Kagan, members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. 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 Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee vote favorably for Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Licensing and Regulations – SB 536.

This bill would establish requirements for the use and treatment of dogs or cats by a research facility or testing facility; prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using certain dogs and cats for research or testing purposes and performing certain procedures on dogs or cats; prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using traditional animal test methods under certain circumstances; prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from conducting a canine or feline toxicological experiment under certain circumstances; applying certain provisions of law regarding the adoption of dogs and cats used for scientific research purposes to testing facilities; and generally relating to research facilities and testing facilities that use animals in research, education, or testing.

Maryland has many research institutions, both private and academic, that test on animals. Currently, there is inadequate accountability to ensure that the animals used in testing are being treated humanely. When a non-animal alternative test is available it is not guaranteed that the transition to the newer and more humane alternative gets implemented. Change is not always easy for large institutions, so the reality is that such animal tests can persist and even increase long after suitable alternative methods are available. This bill places guardrails on these tests, what animals can be used, and other aspects of testing on animals that are needed to ensure that humane best practices are being followed.

Maryland's lab animals are counting on us!

In closing, I would like to thank Senator Kramer for his sponsorship of SB 536 and ask the committee to give this bill a favorable report.

SB0806 - Testimony - DMV Voters for Animals.pdf

Uploaded by: MAX BROAD

Position: FAV



DMV VOTERS

FOR ANIMALS

Chair Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens in Commercial Egg Production
SB0806

February 25, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee –

DMV Voters for Animals is a non-profit lifting up the policies and politicians doing the most for animals in the DMV metropolitan region.

The bill SB0806 Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens in Commercial Egg Production proposes to prohibit the extreme confinement of chickens who provide the eggs that Marylanders and others throughout the country eat. If you can entertain the idea that a chicken is sentient—capable of feeling sensations, pain, and emotions—you can see that this bill will make a world of difference.

While discussions about animal welfare often focus on statistics, I want to bring your attention to the lived experience of just one hen—so that we might understand what this bill truly means for those whose lives depend on it.

You are born into a world that will never let you be who you are.

You are a hen. Your body was made to move—to scratch at the earth, to explore your surroundings, to perch high in the trees where you feel safe. You long to stretch your wings wide, to dust bathe and clean yourself the way your instincts urge you to. You crave the simple pleasure of building a nest, of finding the perfect quiet corner to lay your egg. These desires are not taught; they are a part of you.

But in this world, none of that is possible.

From the moment you are placed in a battery cage, your body is no longer your own. The space around you is barely bigger than you are, shared with so many others that



your movements are not your choice. If you try to stretch, you hit a wall of feathers and wire. If you try to step forward, your feet meet cold metal, the sharp grid of the cage floor cutting into you. The air is thick with ammonia, and your lungs burn with every breath.

You have never seen the sky. You have never felt rain. Your wings—made for flight—hang useless at your sides.

The others around you suffer just as you do. Some grow weak and die, their bodies pressed against yours because there is nowhere else for them to go. You learn to exist without ever really living.

All the while, the world outside moves on, unaware of what it feels like to be you. Battery cages do not just confine hens—they erase them. They deny the most fundamental expressions of what it means to be a chicken. They take away movement, comfort, and choice; forcing living, feeling beings into a lifetime of deprivation.

This bill is not about ending egg production. It is about recognizing that the animals we rely on for food are living, feeling individuals—not machines. The suffering that battery cages inflict is both unnecessary and unjustifiable. Maryland has the opportunity to align itself with a growing movement toward more humane treatment of farmed animals, as several other states have already done.

I urge you to vote yes on SB0806 Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens in Commercial Egg Production.

Sincerely,

Max Broad

Executive Director
DMV Voters for Animals



DMV VOTERS

FOR ANIMALS



MDSupportSB536.pdf

Uploaded by: Monica Engebretson

Position: FAV



February 25, 2025

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

RE: Support for SB 536 – An Act Concerning Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals

Dear Committee members,

On behalf of Cruelty Free International, a leading organization working to promote the use of modern non-animal testing methods around the world, I write in support of SB 536.

This bill will help ensure that animals are not used in outdated unnecessary tests when valid non-animal methods are available for ensuring the safety of cosmetics, household products, medicines, vaccines, and pesticides. The bill also prohibits certain particularly cruel and problematic practices such as devocalization and the acquisition of dogs and cats from shelters or class B dealers for laboratory use. Crucially, SB 536 will provide state accountability for the use of animal used in research and testing by requiring the facilities covered by the bill to annually report the number of animals used, waivers used for dog and cat toxicological experiments, the number of dogs and cats released for adoption, and data on their use of animal methods and non-animal methods.

Mandating alternatives

Historically, animals have been used in painful tests to assess the safety of many products and medicines used by people. However, in the past 35 years, due to innovations in science, animal tests are increasingly being replaced with non-animal approaches. Modern alternatives are required to go through a rigorous process to demonstrate that they are as or more effective than the animal tests they replace. SB 536 requires the use of alternatives that have been approved for use by the regulatory agencies responsible for regulating the product being tested.

It may be commonly assumed that once a non-animal alternative test is available the animal tests no longer occur, or at least rarely. The reality is that such animal tests can persist and even increase long after the adoption of suitable alternative methods. For example, Cruelty Free International has created a list of 10 regulatory animal tests that are still conducted in the US despite the availability of valid non-animal test methods. Such animal tests are long overdue for replacement. SB 536 will identify and what, if any, outdated tests are still being used in Maryland and help to complete the replacement process once and for all, for both scientific and ethical reasons.

Post research placement of dogs and cats.

In the past ten years laws governing post-research placement for dogs (and sometimes cats) have been passed by sixteen states and federal legislation has been considered on this issue. However, information on law compliance and the number of animals released for adoption in these states is lacking. Cruelty Free International conducted a review of state laboratory laws and concluded that without specific reporting requirements and publicly available information about research facilities, their adoption policies and availability of adoptable animals, it could be difficult if not impossible, to enforce such laws or to measure their life-saving impact. SB 536 would address this issue by requiring that laboratories in the state report the number of dogs and cats adopted into homes after their time in research has ended.

State Accountability

Requiring state research and testing facilities to annually report the on the type and purpose of animal tests conducted, waivers used, as well as the use of non-animal test methods will help evaluate Maryland's progress in achieving the goal of replacing the use of animals in testing whenever possible and will help identify areas where

more work needs to be done to either develop new non-animal methods or ensure the uptake of existing non-animal tests.

It has become clear that individual states must play a greater role in overseeing activities involving the use of animals in research and testing to meet public expectations for the protection and reduction of animals used in research and testing. SB 536 will help achieve this.

Again, I urge your support.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Monica Engebretson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Monica Engebretson
Head of Public Affairs N. America
Cruelty Free International

Monica.Engebretson@crueltyfreeinternational.org

SB 536 FAVORABLE - American Anti-Vivisection Socie

Uploaded by: Sherman McFarland

Position: FAV



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Jenkintown, PA 19046-1611
Phone: 215.887.0816
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Web: www.aavs.org

Bill: SB 536

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

Position: Support

Date: February 25, 2025

Dear Chairman Feldman,

Thank you very much to you and the members of the Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment for welcoming testimony on SB 536. My name is Sherman McFarland, and I am the Director of Policy for the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS). AAVS's mission is to end the use of animals in science through education, advocacy, and the development of alternative methods. Since 1883, we have been monitoring the use of animals in science including progress in alternatives. On behalf of our members and supporters, including those in Maryland, I am submitting written testimony in support of SB 536 because this legislation will spare the lives of dogs, cats, and other animals used in research and testing in Maryland, and it will advance the use of reliable, non-animal test methods.

There are problems with testing on animals. Approximately 90% of drugs tested on animals fail in human clinical trials. Science has come to understand the benefits of using advanced in vitro test methods based on human biology, which makes them more accurate predictors of human responses to drugs and chemicals. Cost savings and savings in time are also added value of non-animal methods.

Maryland became a leader in non-animal science when it established the Human-Relevant Research Fund in 2023. This groundbreaking law created a grant program for scientists in the state developing non-animal test methods. SB 536 ensures that such alternative methods are being used as soon as they are accepted by the appropriate regulatory agencies. AAVS also supports SB 536 because it would prohibit private research and testing facilities from engaging in extreme practices that cause animal suffering.

Protecting Dogs and Cats, Ensuring Their Welfare, and Reducing Their Use in Research and Testing

SB 536 requires each private research and testing facility located in Maryland to ensure that the number of dogs and cats used in research or testing is reduced to the smallest number possible by using scientifically reliable and relevant methods that do not involve the use of dogs or cats. SB 536 also prohibits research and testing facilities from using for research or testing purposes: (1) a dog sold by a Class B dealer licensed under the federal Animal Welfare Act; (2) a dog or cat obtained from a person

that did not breed and raise the dog or cat, including a dog or cat obtained from an auction, flea market, or animal shelter; and (3) a dog or cat that has undergone a devocalization surgery. Furthermore, SB 536 prohibits research and testing facilities from performing devocalization surgeries on dogs and cats. SB 536 also requires that the dogs and cats used by research and testing facilities must be euthanized only by a lethal injection of sodium pentobarbital administered either by a veterinarian licensed in Maryland or under the direct supervision of a veterinarian licensed in the state.

Private Research and Testing Facilities Are Required to Use Non-Animal Test Methods

AAVS asks: why would you test on an animal if a valid non-animal alternative is available? SB 536 addresses this with a common sense provision to prohibit private research and testing facilities from using a traditional animal test method if the agency responsible for regulating the specific product or activity for which a test method is used has: (1) approved a test method that does not use animals; or (2) granted a research or testing facility a waiver from using a traditional animal test method. If a test method that does not use animals is unavailable or a waiver has not been granted, a research or testing facility may use a traditional animal test method if the facility uses the fewest number of animals possible and minimizes the level of pain, suffering, and stress of an animal used for testing.

Requirement to Report the Use of Animals in Research and Testing

Lastly, SB 536 requires each private research and testing facility in Maryland to report to the state Secretary of Agriculture the following information about the preceding 12-month period: (1) the number of each species of animal owned and used by a research or testing facility; (2) the number of dogs or cats released to animal rescue organizations and the names of the animal rescue organizations to which the dogs and cats were released; (3) the type and number of alternative test methods and traditional animal test methods used; (4) the number of traditional animal test method waivers and canine or feline toxicological experiment waivers used; and (5) the purpose of any tests conducted using alternative test methods or traditional animal test methods. Private research and testing facilities would be required to report this information to the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture each year on or before January 31. The state Secretary of Agriculture would then be required to collect this information reported by research and testing facilities, prepare an annual report of the information, and post it on the state Department of Agriculture's website. SB 536 also has an enforcement mechanism because it levies monetary penalties against private research and testing facilities that violate the provisions of the bill.

Conclusion

In conclusion, AAVS supports SB 536 because it:

- Prohibits private research and testing facilities from using a traditional animal test method if the agency responsible for regulating the specific product or activity for which a test method is used has: (1) approved a test method that does not use animals; or (2) granted a research or testing facility a waiver from using a traditional animal test method;
- Allows private research and testing facilities to use a traditional animal test method if they use the fewest number of animals possible and minimize the level of pain, suffering, and stress of an animal used for testing when there is no alternative test method available or waiver granted.
- Requires that the number of dogs and cats used in research or testing is reduced to the smallest number possible by using scientifically reliable and relevant methods that do not involve the use of dogs or cats;
- Prohibits private research and testing facilities from using for research or testing purposes: (1) a dog sold by a Class B dealer licensed under the federal Animal Welfare Act; (2) a dog or cat obtained from a person that did not breed and raise the dog or cat, including a dog or cat obtained from an auction, flea market, or animal shelter; and (3) a dog or cat that has undergone a devocalization surgery;
- Prohibits private research and testing facilities from performing devocalization surgeries on dogs and cats;
- Requires private research and testing facilities to annually report: (1) the number of each species of animal they owned and used; (2) the number of dogs and cats released to animal rescue organizations and the names of those animal rescue organizations; and (3) the type, purpose, and number of alternative test methods and traditional animal test methods used.

SB 536 represents a significant and humane step forward for Maryland. This bill will prevent unnecessary suffering and spare the lives of dogs, cats, and other animals, and it will advance the use of scientifically reliable and relevant non-animal test methods. Thank you very much for allowing me to testify in support of SB 536. If you or any member of the Committee has questions about my testimony, or needs more information, please contact me via email at smcfarland@aavs.org.

Sincerely,

Sherman McFarland
Director of Policy

NABR MD SB536 FINAL1.pdf

Uploaded by: Brandon Morton

Position: UNF



National Association for BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

February 25, 2025

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

Dear Chairman Feldman:

The National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) is writing in opposition to SB 536, Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation.

This bill would require facilities that use animals in research, education, or testing to be licensed by the State Department of Agriculture; establish a State Inspector of Animal Welfare in the Department to inspect research facilities and testing facilities; and require a research facility and a testing facility to notify the State Inspector of certain violations. In addition, this bill establishes requirements for the use of dogs or cats by a research facility including prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using certain dogs and cats for research or testing purposes, performing devocalization procedures on dogs or cats, and prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using traditional animal test methods under certain circumstances.

For more than 46 years, NABR has been the nation's only organization solely dedicated to advocating for sound public policy in support of ethical and essential laboratory animal research and the lifesaving discoveries they produce. NABR's diverse and unified membership includes more than 330 universities, medical and veterinary schools, teaching hospitals, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, patient groups and academic and professional societies that rely on humane and responsible animal research to advance global human and animal health.

Animal research remains vital to our nation's mission to understand disease, discover targeted therapies, alleviate suffering, and improve and increase the quality of life. Biomedical research projects involving animals are governed by a strict structure of laws, regulations and guidelines and continue to yield invaluable data in the process of discovering new therapies to treat, cure and prevent disease. Cancer therapies, immunizations, organ transplants, reconstructive surgeries and other medical innovations have been brought to fruition through research conducted at Maryland based companies and institutions.

NABR believes this legislation is unnecessarily duplicative of oversight that is already required at the federal level. Under current federal law, research facilities are subject to unannounced USDA inspections and must comply with the Animal Welfare Act as well as the Public Health Service Policy *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Policies and protocols are in place, and strictly adhered to, that address animal housing and care, veterinary medical care, facilities management, training, and occupational health. Furthermore, most research institutions are also accredited by AAALAC International. AAALAC International is the primary accrediting body for animal research programs in the United States and elsewhere.

We support efforts to replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in drug and vaccine development. However, new drug and vaccine testing technologies to realize this vision at a broad scale and that meet regulatory acceptance are still many years away.

We ask the committee to unfavorably report SB 536 so Maryland research facilities can continue to create lifesaving treatments for diseases, discover targeted therapies, alleviate suffering, and improve and increase the quality of life for both humans and animals. Should you or your staff have questions please contact Brandon Morton, NABR's Vice President of Government Affairs via email at bmorton@nabr.org.

Sincerely,

Matthew R. Bailey, President

NABR MD SB536 FINAL1.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Bailey

Position: UNF



National Association for
**BIOMEDICAL
RESEARCH**

February 25, 2025

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

Dear Chairman Feldman:

The National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) is writing in opposition to SB 536, Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation.

This bill would require facilities that use animals in research, education, or testing to be licensed by the State Department of Agriculture; establish a State Inspector of Animal Welfare in the Department to inspect research facilities and testing facilities; and require a research facility and a testing facility to notify the State Inspector of certain violations. In addition, this bill establishes requirements for the use of dogs or cats by a research facility including prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using certain dogs and cats for research or testing purposes, performing devocalization procedures on dogs or cats, and prohibiting a research facility and testing facility from using traditional animal test methods under certain circumstances.

For more than 46 years, NABR has been the nation's only organization solely dedicated to advocating for sound public policy in support of ethical and essential laboratory animal research and the lifesaving discoveries they produce. NABR's diverse and unified membership includes more than 330 universities, medical and veterinary schools, teaching hospitals, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, patient groups and academic and professional societies that rely on humane and responsible animal research to advance global human and animal health.

Animal research remains vital to our nation's mission to understand disease, discover targeted therapies, alleviate suffering, and improve and increase the quality of life. Biomedical research projects involving animals are governed by a strict structure of laws, regulations and guidelines and continue to yield invaluable data in the process of discovering new therapies to treat, cure and prevent disease. Cancer therapies, immunizations, organ transplants, reconstructive surgeries and other medical innovations have been brought to fruition through research conducted at Maryland based companies and institutions.

NABR believes this legislation is unnecessarily duplicative of oversight that is already required at the federal level. Under current federal law, research facilities are subject to unannounced USDA inspections and must comply with the Animal Welfare Act as well as the Public Health Service Policy *The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Policies and protocols are in place, and strictly adhered to, that address animal housing and care, veterinary medical care, facilities management, training, and occupational health. Furthermore, most research institutions are also accredited by AAALAC International. AAALAC International is the primary accrediting body for animal research programs in the United States and elsewhere.

We support efforts to replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in drug and vaccine development. However, new drug and vaccine testing technologies to realize this vision at a broad scale and that meet regulatory acceptance are still many years away.

We ask the committee to unfavorably report SB 536 so Maryland research facilities can continue to create lifesaving treatments for diseases, discover targeted therapies, alleviate suffering, and improve and increase the quality of life for both humans and animals. Should you or your staff have questions please contact Brandon Morton, NABR's Vice President of Government Affairs via email at bmorton@nabr.org.

Sincerely,

Matthew R. Bailey, President

SB 536 - Johns Hopkins - Oppose.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Huber

Position: UNF

TO: The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair
*Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
Committee*

SB536
Unfavorable

FROM: Michael Huber
Director, Maryland Government Affairs

DATE: February 27, 2025

RE: SB536 Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals - Regulation

Johns Hopkins opposes **SB 536 – Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation**. This bill seeks to regulate research and testing facilities that use animals. The bill places restrictions on the use of dogs and cats by these facilities. The bill prohibits the use of what it terms traditional animal test methods where an alternative test method has been approved. There are significant penalties for violations of the bill.

As the leading research institution in the state, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine takes seriously its mission to improve the health of the community and the world by setting the standard of excellence in medical education, research, and clinical care. The use of animals is essential to the success of our mission.

Almost every medical advancement – from COVID-19 vaccines, insulin therapy for diabetes, treatments for cardiovascular diseases, cancer therapy to organ transplants – are the direct result of research performed on animals. Simply put, modern medicine, as we understand it today, would not exist without research performed in animals.

For example, the state of Maryland played a key role in the development of COVID-19 vaccines. Starting five years ago, as COVID-19 initially spread world-wide, institutions, including Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland, and private companies, rapidly ramped up research to develop new ways to treat and prevent COVID-19. The vaccines and therapeutics developed by biomedical researchers during this time were tested on animals before human trials as an integral part of development. Different kinds of institutions and facilities contributed to this effort, leading to widely available COVID-19 vaccines in an unexpectedly short time. These efforts were central to containing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, this bill will hobble that mission and negatively impact critical lifesaving research – including vaccine development and cancer treatments – happening at research institutions throughout the state in several ways. It is duplicative with existing federal law. It ignores critical, and effective internal policies.

Research facilities are subject to extensive oversight by multiple federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health – Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and we are committed to complying with all federal laws that govern the use of animals in research.

Additionally, there are already mechanisms in place to encourage the use of alternative methods. All researchers at Johns Hopkins, for instance, who use animals for research and teaching must have a protocol approved with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). In order to obtain approval, they must demonstrate that there are *no scientifically viable alternatives available*.

In fact, Johns Hopkins is a major supporter of alternatives to animal testing. In fact, Johns Hopkins is home to the Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing (CAAT). Housed in the Bloomberg School of Public Health and founded in 1981, CAAT supports the creation, development, validation, and use of alternatives to animals in research, product safety testing, and education. Researchers at Johns Hopkins have led the way in developing alternatives to animal testing.

The robust existing federal oversight and internal procedures obviate the need to establish a new layer of regulation. Adding another layer of oversight will be confusing for researchers in Maryland and their teams, will mean more time away from their labs and research, and generally make it harder to perform the research that is vital to our mission and provides significant benefit to our patients and to society.

For the reasons stated above, we urge an UNFAVORABLE committee report on **Senate Bill 536**.

PSBR Letter SB 536 - Final.pdf

Uploaded by: Tom Leach

Position: UNF

February 27, 2025

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

Dear Chairman Feldman:

The Pennsylvania Society for Biomedical Research (PSBR) opposes Senate Bill No. 536 - Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Regulation, which would, among other provisions, require each research facility and testing facility in the State that uses animals in research, education, or testing to be licensed by the Department of Agriculture; establish a State Inspector of Animal Welfare in the Department to inspect research facilities and testing facilities; and require a research facility and a testing facility to notify the State Inspector of certain violations.

The research community continues to work diligently to develop testing models that do not require animals and remains committed to the 3Rs – the Refinement, Reduction and ultimate Replacement of animal models. But, the anti-research activists seek to end lifesaving work involving animals immediately, before reliable non-animal model (NAM) alternatives are fully developed and validated to replace them. This legislation advances the goals of anti-research activists. This ill-conceived and unrealistic agenda will be absolutely devastating to human and animal health worldwide. The biomedical research community encourages you to not fall victim to misleading animal extremists and others who refuse or fail to recognize the importance of animals, including dogs and cats, to the research we all demand for ourselves and our loved one.

First, it must be noted that research in dogs and cats is far from the first step in this incredibly important process. Typically, these tests are initiated using in silico (computer-based modeling) and in vitro (cell culture based) systems. Once these non-animal assessments are completed and initial safety indications are met, tests in rodents then take place. Barring any initial findings in these small animal models, an assessment in a larger animal species comes next. When this step is finally reached, dogs are often required because canines provide highly meaningful data that has been clearly shown to translate to safety in humans.

Dogs and cats are used in research when there is a critical need. Alternatives are utilized before research with dogs take place. Of course, these alternatives can only be used when they exist, are proven to work and provide all the necessary data. Adding administrative burdens to the research process is simply unnecessary. However, it is especially true for non-animal models. Government should be encouraging the use of NAMs, not adding red tape that could discourage the robust development and incorporation of alternatives.

The highly regulated use of animals in research must also be approved by an institution's Animal Care and Use Committee, which already reviews documentation to confirm that there are no viable non-animal alternatives available and that researchers demonstrate that the research adheres to the 3Rs principles previously mentioned, including documentation that shows the research utilizes the fewest number of animals to obtain reliable and relevant data.

Importantly, the reporting requirements in SB536 create significant issues for the research community. In some cases, the information is duplicative of reporting already publicly accessible at the federal level. Specifically, institutions already report annually the number and species of animals used in research and similar details are also reported in each inspection report. The reporting required by the federal government is so significant that legislation and regulations were specifically developed to seek ways to reduce administrative burdens. In other cases, the release of information required under SB 536 could include protected veterinary medical information, intellectual property, or trade secrets. For example, the purpose of any traditional animal test and the type of test used could lead to the identification of new drugs under development. While problematic for academic institutions, this is especially problematic for corporations and other private research institutions.

Similarly, the individuals and organizations who receive re-homed animals are kept anonymous and are subject to re-homing agreements that are confidential to protect both their own privacy and the animals placed with these individuals or organizations. There are well-documented incidents of harassment and intimidation by anti-research activists against those who assist in the re-homing of research animals. As such, the names of organizations and individuals involved in this process should remain confidential.

In summary, PSBR believes strongly that this legislation unnecessarily seeks to further regulate an already highly regulated research community, which could increase the cost, both in time and resources, of advancing research and science in Maryland. It also makes the state "unfriendly" to research that requires animal models and could drive away the best and brightest researchers to institutions located in other jurisdictions. That is, this legislation would make Maryland a less acceptable jurisdiction for research in a time when domestic research is critical and in need of promotion.

Thank you for considering our views on this important issue.

Pennsylvania Society for Biomedical Research

By:



Thomas A. Leach
Executive Director