

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

FROM: Sameer Sidh
Director, Maryland Government Affairs

SB422
Unfavorable

DATE: February 13, 2026

RE: SB422 - Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals - Adoption and Reporting Requirements

Johns Hopkins opposes **SB422 Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals - Adoption and Reporting Requirements**. This bill requires research and testing facilities in the state to report annually to the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture. The report must state the number of dogs or cats owned and used by the facility and the number of dogs or cats released to animal rescue organizations. The Department will then aggregate this data for an annual, public report. This bill requires institutions of higher education that use animals in research or testing to report to the General Assembly on the results of any inspection by the Department of Agriculture, including any violations, and be subject to substantial fines for violations of federal inspections.

As the leading research institution in the state, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine takes seriously its mission to improve the health of 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. Beginning 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.

This legislation is being filed in the backdrop of significant reductions in federal research grant activity, particularly from the National Institute of Health (NIH), supporting critical research to pursue a cure for cancer and other diseases. In 2025 alone, the value of Johns Hopkins' multiyear federal research grant portfolio has declined by a staggering amount exceeding \$500 million. Excluding USAID grants, Johns Hopkins has endured 86 federal grant terminations worth approximately \$66 million. Future federal research funding prospects look bleak as well, with NIH posting 83% fewer new funding opportunities in 2025 as compared to calendar year 2024. Layering a State-level fine structure based on activity already regulated by the federal government only exacerbates existential threats to research activity at Johns Hopkins and beyond.

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). The reports generated from that oversight are publicly available. As such, this bill's reporting requirements are unnecessary and duplicative of existing federal regulations.

For the reasons stated above, we urge an UNFAVORABLE committee report on **Senate Bill 422**.