



Formerly called the Humane
Society of the United States

Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance

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February 17, 2026

Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Two West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **Veterinary Support for SB 423** Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act of 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and members of the committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance (HumaneVMA), a national organization of more than 8,000 veterinary professional members (including 60 Maryland veterinarians) with a focus on the health and welfare of all animals, including those used in research. We strongly support SB 423, the Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act of 2026.

This bill requires Maryland product testing facilities to use non-animal testing methods when they are available, provide information of equivalent or superior scientific quality and relevance, and approved by the relevant federal agencies. It also mandates minimizing animal use and suffering when no non-animal alternatives exist, and requires annual reporting on the use of animals, alternatives, and waivers. The legislation builds on Maryland's leadership in advancing human-relevant research and aims to promote innovation, transparency, and investment in non-animal technologies.

Non-animal methods—such as advanced cell-based systems and organs-on-chips—can better replicate human biology and often outperform animal tests in predicting human outcomes. Animal testing has well-documented scientific limitations, including species differences that contribute to high drug failure rates in human clinical trials. By requiring companies to adopt modern alternatives as they become available, SB 423 would help ensure safer, more reliable product testing while phasing in changes to allow industry compliance.

SB 423 also strengthens protections for dogs and cats used in research. It reinforces compliance with Maryland's 2018 Beagle Bill by requiring annual reporting on the number of animals used and adopted, bans cruel devocalization procedures, and mandates humane euthanasia using sodium pentobarbital under veterinary supervision. Additionally, the bill enhances transparency by requiring more comprehensive reporting on animal use in Maryland facilities, providing the public with a clearer understanding of research practices in the state.

For these reasons, the HumaneVMA respectfully encourages the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to support SB 423.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carrie B. Waters".

Carrie B. Waters, DVM, PhD, JD, DACVIM
Maryland State Representative
Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance (HumaneVMA)