

February 17, 2026

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
SB0423 The Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act
FAVORABLE

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 0423, The Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act, which builds on the foundation of previous legislation and puts Maryland at the forefront of developing and implementing non-animal testing methods. Our organization, the Alternatives Research & Development Foundation (ARDF), is a non-profit funding organization that supports the development of non-animal research methods and models. Through our grant programs and sponsorship of scientific conferences, ARDF supports rigorous and innovative research to advance the development of human-relevant methods and replace the use of animals in research, education, and testing.

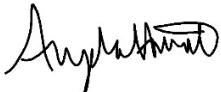
Policy is needed to encourage the use of alternative methods

The Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act is a crucial next step toward realizing the full potential of non-animal, human-relevant testing methods. Whereas the research supported by Maryland's Human-Relevant Research Fund is spurring the development of innovative and groundbreaking non-animal testing methods, overcoming the scientific challenges is only the first step to ushering in a new era of chemical and safety testing. Policy changes are also needed to overcome structural barriers that limit the widespread use of these methods. The Animal Research Modernization and Best Practices Act would help encourage companies and facilities to adopt the most up-to-date and effective methods for chemical and safety testing. Transitioning to non-animal testing methods has several potential benefits, but change can be difficult, even when it is for the better. Requiring facilities to use approved non-animal methods when applicable creates an important incentive for investing in the adoption of new practices. Establishing reporting requirements for the use of animals and alternative methods for product testing ensures that the implementation of alternative methods is transparent and that progress can be tracked.

Leveraging Maryland's role as a leader in this area

We enthusiastically supported creation of the Human-Relevant Research Fund, which set Maryland apart as the first state in the nation to create a dedicated fund for alternative methods research. As the home of the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and Johns Hopkins University, Maryland residents include some of the most successful and innovative biomedical researchers in the country, and the companies along the I-270 biotechnology corridor are a testament to the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of Maryland's diverse and highly-educated workforce. Maryland has an impressive track record of recognizing the importance of new technologies and wisely investing in them. Both the past and future investments in these technologies need to be buttressed by sound policy such as S.B 0423, in order to ensure that Marylanders continue to benefit from these advances.

Sincerely,



Angela Hvitved
Director
Alternatives Research & Development Foundation