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February 17, 2023

Lawrence A. Tabak
Director
National Institutes of Health

Michael Lauer
Deputy Director for Extramural Research
National Institutes of Health

Robert W. Eisinger
Acting Director, Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives
National Institutes of Health

Re: Request that NIH End Macaque Experimentation at Harvard Medical School

Dear Dr. Tabak, Dr. Lauer, and Dr. Eisinger:

We have serious concerns about experimentation on macaque monkeys taking place at a Harvard Medical School laboratory and funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

As scientists, researchers, clinicians and other concerned citizens involved with the MISS Foundation (an international, research-based 501(c)3 established in 1996) who have dedicated our lives to the alleviation of suffering, we urge NIH to terminate the funding of ongoing and future experiments on non-human primates in general, and Harvard researcher Dr. Margaret S. Livingstone's research in particular.

The NIH has spent millions of taxpayer dollars on Dr. Livingstone's research while hundreds of scientists representing centuries of expertise all agree that experiments like this do not add any meaningful contribution to our knowledge of primate or human behavior, and that maternal-separation methods are cruel, unnecessary, and fail to meet modern scientific and ethical standards.

Leading international experts in primate behavior and welfare such as Dr. Jane Goodall have strongly condemned Livingstone's research and taken the time to add their names to the growing call of scientists around the world who demand the cessation of this expensive and unnecessary torture of innocent beings who did not consent.

The vast majority of experts agree that Livingstone's research is ethically dubious. Laboratory research using stressed animals offers limited to no applicability to humans.

As demonstrated by the recent public outcry about this research, there is a strong and growing interest in ending horrific practices such as sewing baby monkeys' eyes closed. Instead of spending tens of millions of taxpayer dollars each year on such experiments, NIH should fund research using alternatives to animal testing. Such alternatives will both alleviate the need to subject non-human animals to pain and distress, and will be more likely to produce results that may actually benefit humans.

NIH is required by law to ensure that the millions of dollars of taxpayer funds provided via grants to research institutions are not used for inhumane or other improper purposes, and to terminate and/or cease the funding for any research that does not meet these requirements.

Therefore, it is imperative that the agency act immediately to cease funding of the experiments occurring at Harvard Medical School, and similar experiments occurring elsewhere in this country, and ensure that taxpayer money is not being used to continue to support unethical, barbaric practices that simultaneously fail to advance scientific knowledge in any meaningful way.

Sincerely yours,

Kelli Montgomery, ED
Joanne Cacciatore PhD
Elizabeth Caspian, MD
On behalf of the MISS Foundation and
The Selah Carefarm team

cc: Senator Patty Murray, Chair, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, Senate Committee on Appropriations

cc: Congressman Robert Aderholt, Chair, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Subcommittee, House Committee on Appropriations

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