

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,
EDUCATION AND RELATED AGENCIES
FOR FY 2009 BUDGET**

**TESTIMONY OF
THEODORA CAPALDO, ED.D. PRESIDENT**

**THE NEW ENGLAND ANTI-VIVISECTION SOCIETY
PROJECT R&R: RELEASE AND RESTITUTION FOR CHIMPANZEES IN U.S. LABORATORIES**

March 31, 2008

Founded in 1895, the New England Anti-Vivisection Society is one of the oldest and longest standing animal protection organizations in the United States. On behalf of our more than 25,000 supporters and supporters of our program, Project R&R, we submit testimony on our funding priorities for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee in Fiscal Year 2009. Dedicated to human health and well being as well as laboratory animal well being, we appreciate the opportunity to present testimony relevant for the FY 2009 budget request. We believe these priorities will serve both humans and animals.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony to the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2009. Thank you.



NEAVS/Project R&R requests that no federal funding be appropriated for:

- breeding of chimpanzees or other great apes for research
- transfer of federally-owned chimpanzees to private ownership
- housing/maintenance/endowments for federally-owned chimpanzees in private facilities
- maintenance of surplus chimpanzees except in retirement in sanctuary
- research involving the use of chimpanzees

NEAVS/Project R&R requests that federal funding be appropriated for:

- transfer of federally-owned chimpanzees into sanctuary
- housing/maintenance grants for federally-owned chimpanzees in sanctuary
- retirement of all “surplus” chimpanzees now held in laboratories
- reallocation of funding for chimpanzee research into funding non-animal research methods

Substantiating Information

1. The National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) announced a permanent end to funding for the breeding of federally-owned and supported chimpanzees (including funding NIH projects requiring chimpanzee breeding). This NCRR decision recognizes the exorbitant costs of lifetime care of chimpanzees in laboratory settings and its consequent drain to limited and precious research dollars. No other federal agency should threaten this fiscally, ethically, and scientifically sound NCRR decision by providing funding for breeding of federally-owned chimpanzees. To do so would perpetuate an animal model that has been of limited or no value, especially in relation to the costs they require for their care and maintenance. Chimpanzees live for decades and 71 % of the American public, according to an independent public opinion survey, believe those in labs for 10 or more years should be retired. A current estimate of the U.S. population puts that figure at approximately 93 % of the chimpanzees now held in labs.
2. The government is currently spending close to \$10 million dollars each year to care for approximately 600 federally-owned or supported chimpanzees (nearly \$1.0 million per chimpanzee's lifetime). Breeding perpetuates this fiscal burden on the government. Further, grants to private companies, like Charles River Laboratory's (CRL) federal \$43 million 10 year grant could have gone further, covered more chimpanzees, and provided superior care had it been appropriated for sanctuary care and not the laboratory care provided by CRL at Alamogordo. This funding is an example of federal subsidizing of private profits, not an example of sound research dollar priorities.
3. The U.S. is still managing the "surplus of chimpanzees" previously bred to be available to HIV research. Today their use in HIV/AIDS research has diminished to the point of hardly existent. They proved to be a poor, even dangerous model in not only AIDS research but in every area of major "killer diseases" for humans, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, etc. (*An Assessment of the Role of Chimpanzees in AIDS Vaccine Research*, Jarrod Bailey, Ph.D., 2008)
4. Studies have indicated that the majority of chimpanzee research published (in addition to research not accepted for publication) is never later cited in studies to do with human prophylactic, diagnostic, or therapeutic methods. This indicates that in general, the chimpanzee model has made limited contributions to human health and in many cases has actually led to dangerously erroneous applications to humans. (*Chimpanzee Research: An Examination of Its Contribution to Biomedical Knowledge and Efficacy in Combating Human Diseases*, Jarrod Bailey, Ph.D. and Jonathan Balcombe, Ph.D., 2007)

5. The transfer of government-owned and supported chimpanzees into private facilities with accompanying federal endowments would perpetuate their financial burden on taxpayers, and only private facilities would profit from such an arrangement. The lifetime support of federally-owned chimpanzees is required by the CHIMP Act. The government can provide this care more efficiently and effectively through maintaining ownership and transferring all government-owned chimpanzees into the federally supported sanctuary system or private sanctuary that meets those standards. The government can share the cost of their lifetime care with private donations from the public, who would be assured that the chimpanzees are no longer available for research. Private laboratories interested in “maintaining” a chimpanzee population are a fiscally inefficient solution for the government. Such facilities do not provide the quality care that sanctuaries can provide. The private warehousing and/or lifetime use of chimpanzees in private research – supported with government taxpayer dollars -- will lead to public outcry.

6. If private industry receives federal support for breeding and using government owned, once owned or government endowed chimpanzees for their own private research, then private industry would be unfairly, and perhaps illegally, benefiting from federally-owned “resources” meant for the betterment of the American public, not for the profit of private industry.

7. To date, the private sector has not been fiscally responsible for the lifetime care of chimpanzees once their use to them for private profit is over. When their chimpanzees are retired, the private sector has not, to date, offered financial compensation for their chimpanzees’ lifetime care. Instead, on the few occasions where the chimpanzees were sent to sanctuary with some funding, the financial compensation falls far short of what is actually needed, leaving the burden of responsibility on the private facilities and their public donors.

8. If the government: transfers all approximately 600 federally-owned chimpanzees to the national sanctuary system or to private sanctuary that meets or exceeds these standards; appropriates to those sanctuaries the funding currently being given to chimpanzee laboratories; and, prohibits breeding, there is an end to the financial burden that this misused and underproductive animal model has caused the government. The government needs a solution, and the funding priority suggestions set forth herein would offer a major step toward such a solution.

9. Transferring all federally-owned chimpanzees to sanctuary will: (a) consolidate and decrease costs; (b) provide better care; and, (c) offer the public the humane solution they are asking for.

10. Scientific justification for maintaining the exorbitant costs associated with such a physically strong, intellectual curious, socially and emotionally complex species as a chimpanzee does not exist. A 2007 article, “The Endangered Lab Chimp” in *Science*, noted that “a huge number” of chimpanzees are not being used in active research protocols and are therefore “just sitting there.” If breeding ends and current mortality rates continue (as they are expected given the aging population of chimpanzees in U.S. labs), the government will have no – or a bare minimal -- financial responsibility for the chimpanzees it owns within 20 -30 years. No federal funding for breeding will ensure that no breeding of federally-owned or supported chimpanzees for research will occur in FY 2009 and be a major step to ending the government’s non-productive, high cost involvement in chimpanzee research. As years of a voluntary breeding moratorium showed,

private industry is not willing to breed without government support. It understands the costs and refuses to adequately provide for the lifetime care of chimpanzees it already owns. If the use of chimpanzees was lucrative or necessary, then the private industry's dollars and practices would reflect that. However, it is not. The federal government needs to follow suit in such "wise business" decisions.

11. The American and world (great ape research is banned or severely limited in eight scientifically advanced nations and a European Union wide ban is expected to pass soon) public are deeply concerned about the use of chimpanzees in research. Their close emotional, cognitive, and social similarities to humans have put them in a unique category of interspecies ethics. This moral reality has been acknowledged by the government (requirements for their care in the CHIMP Act that apply to no other animal species used in research) and scientists (several private laboratories that used chimpanzees have closed or stop using them), and the American public are clearly concerned about these issues. As the voice of the American public, our administrative offices should consider that: 90% of Americans believe it is unacceptable to confine chimpanzees individually in government-approved cages; 71% believe that chimpanzees who have been in the laboratory for over 10 years should be retired to sanctuary; 54% believe that it is unacceptable for chimpanzees to "undergo research which causes them to suffer for human benefit"; and, twice as many American's support an outright ban on chimpanzee research as do those who oppose such a ban.

12. Therefore, we respectfully request the following committee report language:

"The Committee directs that funds provided in this Act not be used:

to support the breeding of chimpanzees or other great apes for research; to support research that requires breeding of chimpanzees; to support the transfer of ownership of federally-owned chimpanzees to private entities (including endowments for their maintenance); to maintain surplus chimpanzees except in retirement in sanctuary; or to fund new research involving the use of chimpanzees.

The Committee directs that funds provided in this Act be used:

to transfer federally-owned chimpanzees into sanctuary; to house and maintain federally-owned chimpanzees in sanctuary; to retire all "surplus" chimpanzees now held in laboratories; and to reallocate funding from chimpanzee research into non-animal research methods."

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