

Submitter: Michelle Blake

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General  
Government, and Veterans

Measure: HB2904

Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Lewis, Vice Chair Tran, and Members of the Committee:

With thanks to Representatives Gomberg and Scharf for sponsoring HB 2904, I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for this bill and ask your committee to pass it with a "Do-Pass" recommendation. This bill will add much-needed transparency and accountability to an area of great public concern.

There is a dire need for accountability, given the fact that the Oregon Primate Research Center continues to receive federal taxpayer dollars while leading the nation in violations. Imagine the oversight this legislature would impose on any other publicly-funded work that amassed repeated violations resulting in death and appalling cruelty, and please take action to demand greater accountability from this very troubled institution.

Inspection records show that OHSU's primate research center violated the federal Animal Welfare Act 31 times between 2014 and 2022---the worst record of any primate research center in the nation. Fifteen of those violations were classified as the most serious kinds of infractions. There's little need to repeat the sometimes grisly details and describe the pain and suffering that nonhuman primates endured; you know the details.

These repeated and serious violations occur here in Oregon, in our backyards, where this legislature has stated in its animal cruelty statutes that animals are sentient beings capable of experiencing pain, stress, and fear, and should therefore be cared for in a way that minimizes their suffering. Those are Oregon values, shared by the majority of our citizens, and codified into law by our elected officials. Consider also that staff at the facility repeatedly raise concerns about the poor management and a climate of intimidation, and there can be little doubt that OPRC is far out of step with Oregonians' values. Let's honor our values. Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your service to Oregon,  
Michelle Blake  
Salem