

Submitter: Drew Martin

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:

I am writing to strongly OPPOSE HB 2904 – (Requires institution or research facility that performs research, testing or studies involving nonhuman primates to annually report certain information to State Veterinarian).

Nonhuman primates are protected by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), federal laws that govern the treatment of animals involved in research, teaching and testing. The AWA is regularly updated with revisions/additions occurring in 1970, 1976, 1985, 1990, 2002, 2007, 2008 and 2013. Federal inspectors employed by the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service conduct unannounced inspections of all research facilities that house animals covered by the Animal Welfare Act. The results of these inspections and any infractions are publicly reported. In fact, OHSU/ Oregon National Primate Research Center posts all findings from these USDA inspections on our publicly facing website following each visit. Under the AWA regulations, every research facility is required to employ an Attending Veterinarian, and many larger organizations, such as the ONPRC, employ an entire team of veterinarians, behaviorists and animal care staff. These highly trained and committed individuals oversee the health and well-being of the research animals and provide day-to-day care and feeding. There is no shortage of reporting or oversight for animal research facilities in the United States, which is why I have strong concerns about this legislation. HB 2904 will create new, duplicative and burdensome reporting requirements for research facilities in Oregon, and appears to come in direct response to criticisms leveled by animal research opposition groups, including those that have previously stated on record that they are opposed to any and all animal-based advancements, despite their history of improving both human and animal health.

Animal use at the ONPRC, like all research facilities, has a great deal of federal and local oversight. In addition to the USDA oversight, the AWA also requires that institutions conducting research involving animals have an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee or IACUC. The IACUC is responsible for ensuring that the animal research program is compliant with the AWA and other applicable laws and guidelines required by agencies that fund research. The IACUC is also responsible for investigating welfare concerns. When unanticipated events that impact animal welfare occur at the ONPRC, the IACUC and animal care program conduct independent investigations to identify issues that may have contributed to the event

and develop improvements to ensure the event is not repeated. OHSU may invite outside experts to review incidents and offer recommendations for improvement. In addition, OHSU reports them to the appropriate regulatory agencies.

The ONPRC has an incredible team of dedicated animal care staff who care for the animals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They support these unique models of human disease which make critical scientific breakthroughs that advance human and animal health possible. HB 2904 is highly duplicative as it calls for additional reporting on top of what is already required by the Animal Welfare Act. Further, the data which Oregon facilities would be required to gather, organize and submit to the State Veterinarian under this proposed measure are, for the most part, readily available to lawmakers, regulators and the general public. Most importantly, however, this requirement would have NO impact on improving the care and/or welfare of the animals. Instead, the extraneous reporting would result in the redirection of valuable resources away from providing exemplary animal care and supporting life-saving research.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Drew Martin