

Hello Chair Tran, other members of the committee, and all those gathered here today.

My name is Sarah Taylor, and I am a PhD candidate at Oregon Health & Science University, and the president of Graduate Researches United – the union that represents graduate researchers at OHSU. I am also a researcher who uses animal models, specifically to develop better treatments for leukemia. I am here to speak in opposition of SB181 on behalf of myself and the graduate researchers that I represent.

Medical breakthrough is not possible without scientific innovation. The advancements that we have witnessed come to fruition in the past several decades are the result of dedication, determination, and commitment to ethical responsibility from the scientific community. Such advancements are in our lives today because of animal research. People long for medical breakthroughs for complex and deadly diseases but often forget that behind these innovative treatments are hundreds of scientists and animals necessary to develop them.

In my life, I have had the privilege of benefiting from animal research countless times. I have been vaccinated against deadly diseases; I have used anesthesia for surgery; I have taken ibuprofen for pain; and I have seen the resurgence of hope after a clinical drug trial started shrinking a friend's otherwise unshrinkable tumor. Every single one of us here has benefited from animal research, and every time we take another headache medicine or pray for a scientific miracle that will make a family member beat Alzheimer's, or ALS, or Cancer, we continue to benefit from it.

As scientists, it is important to acknowledge mistakes made in the past. Decades ago, animal research was abusive and cruel. There is no justification for the pain inflicted—we can only learn and commit to improve. For the past several decades, welfare and ethical regulations have been in place to ensure that animal research follows strict humane standards. All animal researchers are trained to treat every monkey, mouse, and rat with care and respect. Our animals are the heroes behind scientific discovery and medical innovation, and they help you by testing your medicines before they reach your pharmacies. Our nonhuman primates keep you safe.

Those who advocate for closing the ONPRC or eliminating animal research claim that nonhuman primates and other animals are terribly mistreated. Nothing could be further from the truth. We understand that animal research can be controversial but ask you to understand that it is essential. The faculty, staff, and graduate students at ONPRC and beyond deeply care for all our animals, and it worries us that our care is mischaracterized by groups with large platforms. We have deep passion and love for what we do and for the animals that we work with. We encourage questions and vow transparency, because research now is more important than ever.

Thank you for your time.