

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Carter
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Wasserman Schultz and Ranking Member Carter,

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2020 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to prevent funds from going to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to perform painful and distressing research on dogs in USDA pain categories D (inflicting pain with relief) and E (inflicting pain without relief). These sometimes-fatal experiments include drilling into dogs' skulls, inducing heart attacks, and collapsing their lungs. Despite the studies' outdated and inefficient nature, the VA lags behind other agencies in replacing its animal tests with modern technologies that can produce superior results that directly translate to humans. We believe the VA should focus its limited resources on improving the lives of veterans instead of wasting taxpayer dollars on cruel and ineffective dog experimentation.

Congress has already shown its support for ending painful dog studies at the VA through the appropriations process. The House voted to add the Brat-Titus amendment to eliminate funding for these studies to the Make America Secure Appropriations Act of 2018 by voice vote. In addition, restrictions on the VA's use of dog testing were passed into law in the FY2018 and FY2019 MilCon-VA appropriations bills. While we applaud the Subcommittee's leadership in enacting these restrictions, we feel that Congress must go further. Bipartisan support to end the VA's inhumane dog experimentation remains high, including among Members of Congress who have served our nation in uniform.

Over a dozen Veterans Service Organizations representing hundreds of thousands of veterans have endorsed congressional efforts to defund the VA's dog testing due to its torturous nature and lack of benefits for veterans. This broad coalition of support includes AMVETS, American G.I. Forum of the U.S., American Humane Association, American Military Retirees Association, DisabledVeterans.org, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Military Order of The Purple Heart, Military-Veterans Advocacy, The Retired Enlisted Association, United States Army Warrant Officers Association, Veterans for Common Sense, Veterans for Peace, VetsFirst, Wounded Paw Project, and the White Coat Waste Project.

Accordingly, we ask that you include the following bill language:

Sec. __. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to purchase, breed, transport, house, feed,

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maintain, dispose of, or experiment on dogs as part of the conduct of any study assigned to pain category D or E, as defined by the Department of Agriculture.

(b) This section shall not apply to training programs or studies of service dogs described in section 1714 of title 38 United States Code or section 17.148 of title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Dina Titus
Member of Congress

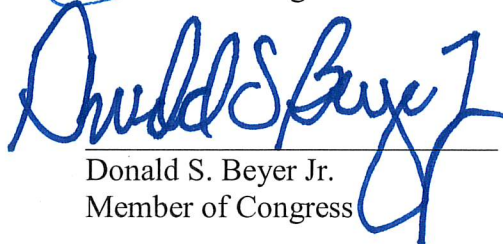


Brian J. Mast
Member of Congress

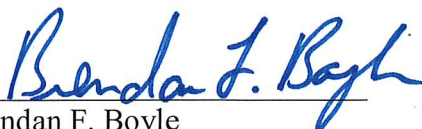


Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

M.C.



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



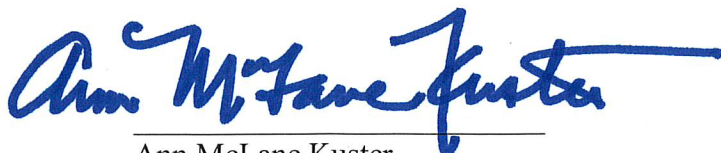
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



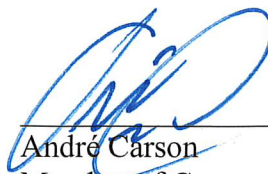
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



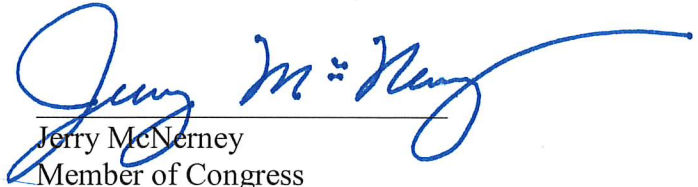
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
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Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



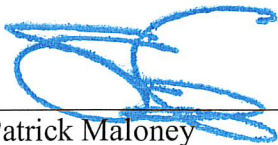
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



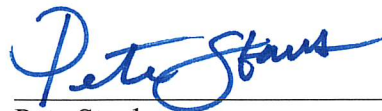
Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



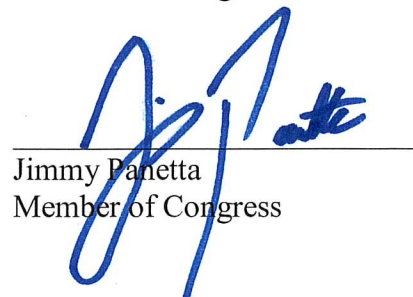
Sean Patrick Maloney
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Darren Soto
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Jimmy Panetta
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Tony Cárdenas

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Harley Rouda

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Alcee L. Hastings

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Salud O. Carbajal

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Deb Haaland

Deb Haaland
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

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Member of Congress

Vern Buchanan

Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress

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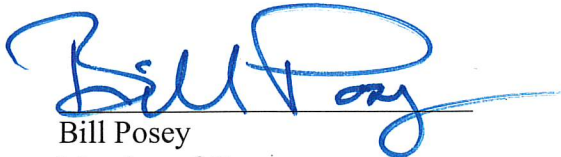
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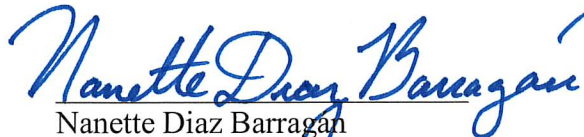
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



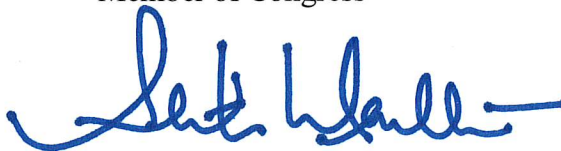
Bill Posey
Member of Congress



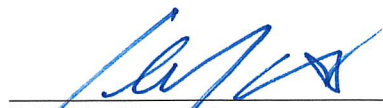
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



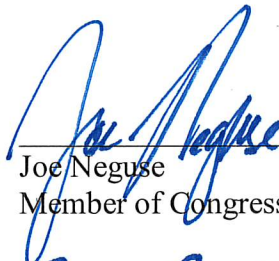
Elaine Luria
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



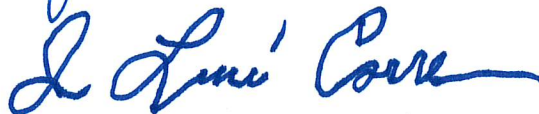
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Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



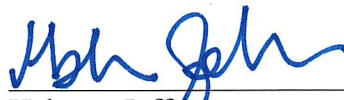
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
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Susie Lee
Member of Congress



Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott R. Tipton", is written over a horizontal line.

Scott R. Tipton
Member of Congress