



Quality Life Through Research

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Member Societies

The American Physiological Society

American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics

American Society for Investigative Pathology

American Society for Nutrition

The American Association of Immunologists

American Association of Anatomists

The Protein Society

Society for Developmental Biology

American Peptide Society

Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities

The American Society for Bone and Mineral Research

American Society for Clinical Investigation

Society for the Study of Reproduction

Teratology Society

The Endocrine Society

The American Society of Human Genetics

Environmental Mutagen Society

International Society for Computational Biology

American College of Sports Medicine

Biomedical Engineering Society

Genetics Society of America

American Federation for Medical Research

Representing over 100,000 biological and biomedical researchers.

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The Honorable _____
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Representative,

As the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States, representing 23 societies and over 100,000 scientists and engineers, FASEB is writing to urge you to reconsider your support for the *Great Ape Protection Act* (GAPA, H.R. 1326). As you may know, H.R. 1326 would ban all research involving bonobos, gorillas, gibbons, orangutans, and chimpanzees. Even though the number of chimpanzees essential to biomedical research is very small, they remain the *only* valid research model for the development of vaccines that could prevent infection from the hepatitis C virus.

We recently addressed these issues in an editorial and stated that, “The *Great Ape Protection Act* would end the use of chimpanzees in biomedical research, grinding promising studies to a halt and unconscionably delaying the release of anti-viral therapies and a vaccine for chronic hepatitis C.” According to the Centers for Disease Control, upwards of 3.9 million Americans are infected with the hepatitis C virus, which is a leading cause of liver transplantation due to liver failure and is responsible for 10,000-20,000 deaths per year. A vaccine for hepatitis C would decrease the number of hospital visits and the otherwise necessary medical treatment for tens of thousands of people in the U.S., thereby decreasing health care costs.

Chimpanzee models have led to major medical advances. In a response to Congressman Brian Bilbray’s inquiry, Dr. Francis Collins, NIH Director, stated that, “Chimpanzees proved invaluable in developing the hepatitis A and B vaccines that are in use today.” He goes on to say that these vaccines have significantly reduced the frequency of infection of hepatitis A and B in the U.S. Research on great apes remains crucial for progress against other viruses including malaria, human cytomegalovirus, respiratory syncytial virus, and some forms of cancer.

Research involving chimpanzees is subject to rigorous oversight. Numerous laws, regulations, and voluntary accreditation organizations govern the humane treatment and environmental enrichment of chimps used in research. These laws ensure that chimpanzees are retired to a federally-funded sanctuary, where they are housed in social groups and provided with a high level of veterinary care until their natural deaths. Furthermore, H.R. 1326 would not only prohibit research that benefits humans, it would also prohibit research for the benefit of great apes. Chimpanzees and gorillas in the wild are threatened by the Ebola virus, and malignant malaria was recently identified in both captive and wild gorillas. Support for H.R. 1326 will not only prevent the needed research for human diseases, but it will prevent research on chimpanzee and

gorilla diseases – inevitably harming the ones the legislation seeks to protect.

Passage of the *Great Ape Protection Act* will inhibit medical advances and the research community's quest to improve human health through new treatments and vaccines. On behalf of the biomedical research community, we ask you to reconsider your support for H.R. 1326, the *Great Ape Protection Act*, and talk with your colleagues about taking similar action.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William T. Talman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

William T. Talman, M.D.
FASEB President