

Contact: Carrie D. Wolinetz, PhD
(301) 634-7650
cwolinetz@faseb.org

FASEB CONDEMNS ATTACKS AGAINST ANIMAL RESEARCHERS IN CALIFORNIA, “THE PUBLIC OUTRAGE...SHOULD BE ECHOED NATIONWIDE,” STATES PRESIDENT

Bethesda, MD – “I am appalled to see that, once again, scientists were attacked by animal rights extremists,” said Richard Marchase, Ph.D., President of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB). “The firebombs launched against University of California researchers last week were unconscionable. Unfortunately, this is only the latest in a rising wave of violence aimed at scientists who conduct life-saving biomedical research using animal models. The public outrage being displayed in Santa Cruz should be echoed nationwide.”

Marchase pointed to examples of other scientists being plagued by death threats, harassment campaigns, and acts of arson and vandalism. “It is one thing to exercise one’s First Amendment rights for a cause one believes in,” he stated. “But threatening the lives of researchers and their families, including the young children who were forced to flee their burning home in Santa Cruz, is not a form of protest. These are reprehensible, criminal acts. Those who wear lab coats should not have to live in fear for pursuing questions that help us treat and cure disease.”

FASEB strongly affirms the essential contribution of animals in research and education aimed at improving the health of both humans and animals. “The role of animals remains critical in understanding the fundamental processes of life and in developing treatments for injury and disease,” Marchase stated. “Scientists take their sense of responsibility for providing proper care and humane treatment for laboratory animals very seriously.”

“I applaud the Humane Society of the United States for condemning the violent activities of these extremists and for contributing money towards the reward to help find and bring these criminals to justice,” Marchase continued. “It is our sincere hope that all stakeholders with an interest in human and animal health can speak with one voice in censuring those who would advocate arson, personal violence, and vandalism as a means to an end.”

FASEB is composed of 21 societies with more than 80,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB enhances the ability of biomedical and life scientists to improve—through their research—the health, well-being and productivity of all people. FASEB’s mission is to advance biological science through collaborative advocacy for research policies that promote scientific progress and education and lead to improvements in human health.