



Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

----Quality Life Through Research----

May 25, 2007

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
Society for Gynecologic Investigation
Environmental Mutagen Society
International Society for Computational Biology
American College of Sports Medicine

President

Leo T. Furcht, M.D.
Allen-Pardee Professor and Head
Department of Laboratory Medicine
and Pathology
University of Minnesota Medical School
420 Delaware St. SE, MMC 609
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Tel: (612) 626-0622
Fax: (612) 626-2696
furch001@umn.edu

9650 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3998
Telephone: 301-634-7650
FAX: 301-634-7651
<http://opa.faseb.org/>

The Honorable David Obey, Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), I am writing to ask for your help in preventing a measure that could have deleterious effects on biomedical research. We are concerned that language related to Class B animal dealers may be attached to the FY 2008 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill and we ask you to make sure that does not occur.

FASEB is extremely grateful for your extraordinary commitment to science and research and are looking forward to presenting you with our public service award for your leadership. This prohibition on Class B dealers is exactly the sort of ill-informed assault on research against which you have fought so tirelessly. The use of dog and cat models for research, while not as prevalent as the use of rodent species, is still necessary for studies related to an array of diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, digestive disorders and neurological conditions. As many of these diseases are related to age or genetic diversity purpose-bred dogs and cats, which are typically young and genetically similar, are simply not suitable for these research studies. In many places, animals for this research can only be obtained through Class B animal dealers, a group licensed by the USDA.

FASEB strongly supports the enforcement of existing laws by the USDA, including the regulation of Class B and other animal dealers. We wholeheartedly support the humane treatment of all research animals, because good animal care and good science go hand-in-hand. Some opponents of the use of animals in research have asserted that Class B dealers are involved in pet theft or regularly violate the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). This is simply perpetuation of a myth. The USDA has the authority and the responsibility to enforce provisions of the AWA that protect pets and enforce humane standards for the housing and care of animals. However, recent attention over one Class B dealer who violated the AWA, and was subsequently fined and put out of business by the USDA, has elicited calls to ban Class B dealers from providing dogs and cats for medical research. FASEB does not believe this is an appropriate course of action, and would disrupt ongoing research programs.

Prohibiting research institutions from purchasing animals from Class B dealers could irrevocably hinder research that potentially culminates in treatments for debilitating diseases, while doing very little to impact the regulation of animal welfare. FASEB respectfully requests that you ensure that the FY 2008 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill does not contain language or amendments that would delay research progress. If

there is any additional information FASEB might provide, we stand ready to assist.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Furcht", written over a faint red horizontal line.

Leo T. Furcht, M.D.
FASEB President