

Written Testimony of
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Funded Animal Cruelty”
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Introduction

Chairwoman Mace, Ranking Member Brown, and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Justin Goodman and I am the Senior Vice President of Advocacy and Public Policy at the non-profit, non-partisan government watchdog group White Coat Waste (WCW) Project.

Many people don't realize that the U.S. government is the single largest funder of animal testing in the country, and, in fact, the world. Based on government documents, we estimate that over \$20 billion a year of taxpayers' money is wasted on ineffective and inhumane tests on tens of millions of puppies, kittens and other animals in the U.S. and in hundreds of foreign laboratories. As we will discuss today, Congress and the public don't have exact figures because oversight of taxpayer-funded animal testing is woefully inadequate.

Polls by reputable nonpartisan national analytic organizations show that most Americans oppose animal testing and even more don't want their tax dollars paying for it. White Coat Waste was founded by our president—who once worked in an animal lab — to be the advocate for tax paying citizens opposed to animal testing to ensure they're not forced to pay for something they fiscally and morally object to.

We have just one mission: to ensure taxpayers are not forced to foot the multi-billion-dollar bill for cruel, unnecessary, and dangerous animal experiments that federal agencies themselves regularly admit are stifling medical innovation and leaving patients to suffer.

With the backing of 3-million-plus supporters, WCW conducts investigations, organizes grassroots campaigns, and lobbies to improve transparency, cut government funding for animal experiments, and retire dogs, cats and other survivors to loving homes.

I have held a leadership role at WCW for over 8 years. In my position, I help coordinate investigations and lead the department that brings our team's evidence of wasteful and abusive taxpayer-funded animal tests to the press to create public awareness. As WCW's lobbyist, I also work with Congress and other decision makers to devise and implement policy solutions to improve accountability, transparency, and oversight.

Among many other accomplishments that have saved animals and tax dollars, WCW's campaigns have exposed and shuttered the government's largest cat lab¹, prompted the enactment of historic federal legislation to eliminate testing on dogs, cats, and primates at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA),² ended the Food and Drug Administration's nicotine addiction tests on baby monkeys,³ and led to the creation of the government's first-ever lab animal retirement policies.⁴ We're perhaps best known for first exposing Dr. Fauci's funding for gain-of-function animal experiments at the Wuhan lab in April 2020 and uncovering his support for cruel beagle tests around the world.⁵

We are a wide tent organization. We're very proud that our efforts to end unnecessary government animal testing enjoy the support of everyone from the Freedom Caucus to the Squad, and many members of this subcommittee, including Chairwoman Mace and Representatives Khanna, Fallon, Grothman and Luna. Ranking Member Brown has also supported legislation to cut animal testing.

Since 2004 when I first discovered, exposed, and shut down a tax-funded primate lab as a graduate student, I have led countless campaigns to expose and stop government spending on animal tests and enact related local, state and federal laws and policies. I

¹ <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/no-more-kitten-slaughterhouse-government-halts-deadly-cat-experiments-n990011>

² <https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2024-04-17/veterans-affairs-animal-testing-experiments-dogs-cats-13581219.html>

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/01/26/monkeys-in-a-nicotine-experiment-can-relax-their-future-is-looking-up/>

⁴ <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/482074-new-fda-policy-allows-lab-animals-to-be-adopted-after-experiments/>

⁵ <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/peteraldhous/white-coat-waste-anthony-fauci-nih-ecohealth-alliance-lab>

have also co-authored peer-reviewed research on ethical, scientific and regulatory issues related to animal testing and frequently co-author opinion pieces on the topic with Members of Congress. My work to help end animal testing has been recognized by organizations including LUSH Cosmetics, American Association of Political Consultants, Campaigns and Elections Magazine, and The Hill.

I am honored to testify this morning on “Transgender Lab Rats and Poisoned Puppies: Oversight of Taxpayer Funded Animal Cruelty,” a bipartisan issue that has been widely acknowledged as an area overdue for reform by Members of this subcommittee and full committee, other Members of Congress, government officials and medical and scientific experts.

\$20 billion of tax money wasted on animal testing annually

Taxpayer-funded animal testing is the poster child for waste, fraud and abuse.

Wasteful spending on animal testing is a government-wide epidemic that's especially relevant to the Oversight Committee and this Subcommittee concerned with innovation and security.

In its 2016-2020 agency-wide Strategic Plan, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) wrote, “animal models often fail to provide good ways to mimic disease or predict how drugs will work in humans, resulting in much wasted time and money while patients wait for therapies.”⁶

DARPA—the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency—admits, “animal models have limited relevance to humans and poorly predict effects in humans.”⁷

This past October, the NIH’s Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)—the NIH’s equivalent of DARPA—stated, “The failure to accurately predict drug effects, and the current approach which uses animals for these predictions, is a huge bottleneck in drug development.”⁸

The NIH and others report that 95 percent of drugs that are safe and effective in animal tests fail in clinical trials because they don’t work or are dangerous.⁹

⁶ <https://www.nih.gov/sites/default/files/about-nih/strategic-plan-fy2016-2020-508.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.darpa.mil/research/programs/microphysiological-systems>

⁸ <https://arpa-h.gov/news-and-events/arpa-h-launches-program-develop-predictive-drug-safety-and-efficacy-models>

⁹ <https://ncats.nih.gov/research/research-activities/ntu>

Simply put, the return-on-investment for taxpayers is abysmal. Despite the NIH budget doubling two decades ago, and animal testing skyrocketing, U.S. life expectancy has barely changed.

Yet, federal agencies continue to dump billions of tax dollars into irrelevant animal experiments each year.

Researchers report that the U.S. government outspends the private sector on animal testing by a margin of two-to-one.¹⁰

The NIH has reported that nearly half of all taxpayer-funded projects it funds involve animal testing, and that as many as 70 percent of projects funded by some agency divisions use animals.¹¹ With a nearly \$48 billion annual budget, that's around \$20 billion spent just by NIH on animal experiments.¹²

That figure doesn't include animal testing spending by other agencies like the Department of Defense (DOD), U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Science Foundation, Food and Drug Administration, and others for which little to no data are available.

These agencies do not report how much tax money is spent on animal tests, how many animals are used, what's being done to them, and what taxpayers are getting out of it.

Because this basic information isn't publicly available, we constantly submit Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests—nearly 300 in 2024—and regularly must spend additional time, money, and energy suing federal agencies for refusing to turn over documents that explain what our tax dollars are paying for.

With this lack of transparency and accountability comes enormous waste.

Examples of wasteful government animal experiments exposed by WCW

When investigating how the government is spending our money on animal testing in over 1,400 labs worldwide, it becomes apparent why federal agencies fight tooth and nail against disclosing too many details.

¹⁰ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4461318/>

¹¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK100123/>

¹² <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/what-we-do/budget>

In his December 2024 Festivus waste report, Senator Rand Paul highlighted several examples of cruel taxpayer-funded cat experiments uncovered by WCW.¹³ In one project funded with over \$10 million from DARPA, cats have marbles shoved up their rectums and are electroshocked to make them defecate. In an ongoing \$1.5 million NIH-funded experiment, cats were strapped to a table and spun hundreds of times to induce nausea and motion sickness.

We've also recently identified over \$240 million in NIH grants for transgender animal experiments, including \$26 million in active funding. Some of these tests examine the effects of sex party drugs or the impact of hormones used for human gender transitions on the size and shape of lab animals' genitals.¹⁴ Guess where 95% of this funding came from? Dr. Fauci's National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Speaking of Dr. Fauci—with Chairwoman Mace's help, we've been able to intercept and halt plans for wasteful and unnecessary testing on dogs and cats that Fauci had signed off on and funded.

In one case, we obtained documents via FOIA showing that NIAID planned to waste \$1.8 million for a series tests on dogs to study a new hay fever drug.¹⁵ They state the purpose was to help gain FDA approval, even though the FDA has stated that it "does not mandate that human drugs be studied in dogs."¹⁶ Even the contractor Fauci was paying to conduct the dog tests admitted they were unnecessary. After criticism from Chairwoman Mace and Senate DOGE Caucus Chair Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), Fauci personally responded and said the dog tests were canceled.¹⁷

In another case, we obtained records detailing how Fauci funded an experiment that would feed scrambled mouse brains to kittens, collect their feces to harvest parasite eggs, and then kill the healthy cats.¹⁸ After our exposé, the experimenters canceled the cat experiments and adopted out all of the cats. These wasteful animal tests should never have been approved and funded in the first place.

¹³ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/healthcare/3268783/rand-paul-festivus-15-million-taxpayer-funded-cat-experiments/>

¹⁴ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/investigations/3267269/biden-administration-spent-millions-dollars-creating-transgender-animal-for-studies/>

¹⁵ <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/nih-to-spend-2-million-in-taxpayer-funds-experimenting-on-puppies/>

¹⁶ <https://wjla.com/features/i-team/animals-drug-testing-fda-labs-animals>

¹⁷ <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2022/07/05/beagle-gate-victory-nih-cancels-faucis-runny-nose-experiments-following-wcw-campaign/>

¹⁸ <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2024/05/31/victory-wcw-investigation-closes-cat-lab-spare-kittens-from-nih-funded-experiments/>

Fortunately, working with members of this committee, we have devised and implemented some effective solutions.

In 2016, White Coat Waste exposed how the VA was conducting deadly experiments on hundreds of dogs each year.¹⁹ In the tests, puppies had latex injected into their arteries to induce heart attacks while being forced to run on treadmills. We also uncovered how VA labs were drilling into cats' skulls and severing their spines.²⁰ In some of the tests, pain relief was intentionally withheld. The experiments were condemned widely by scientists, veterans, lawmakers, and taxpayers across the country.

Thanks to leadership from Chairwoman Mace, Reps. Grothman, Khanna and many others, Congress subsequently enacted first-of-its-kind legislation restricting funding for VA testing on dogs, cats and primates and created an enhanced review, approval and congressional notification process.

As a result of this new rigorous oversight, the VA has ended all of its harmful testing on dogs and cats and has been directed to eliminate primate testing by 2026.²¹ This oversight process can and should be exported to other agencies.

In 2019, we worked with Trump EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler to unveil an historic plan to phase-out testing on dogs and other mammals at the agency by 2035 with a 30 percent drawdown by 2025.²² Wheeler stressed that having timelines and benchmarks was vital to breaking EPA's animal testing habit. Unfortunately, we uncovered that the Biden Administration killed the plan within months of taking office at the behest of bureaucrats and environmental groups and has since been wasting money on irrelevant experiments that force lab animals to inhale wildfire smoke and firearms emissions.²³

Billions in reckless funding for foreign animal labs

The current oversight situation for taxpayer-funded animal experiments is even more appalling overseas.

¹⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2016/11/15/saving-dogs-from-government-research-labs-gets-some-bipartisan-attention/>

²⁰ <https://www.cbsnews.com/losangeles/news/david-goldstein-investigates-west-la-va-cat-experiments/>

²¹ <https://www.stripes.com/veterans/2024-04-17/veterans-affairs-animal-testing-experiments-dogs-cats-13581219.html>

²² <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2023/12/13/wcw-investigation-biden-epa-cancels-plan-to-end-animal-tests-then-kills-retired-lab-bunnies/>

²³ <https://dailycaller.com/2023/12/14/epa-exposed-mice-to-gun-smoke-then-dissected-them-to-study-adverse-health-effects-of-firearm-use/>

As of this morning, there are 344 animal labs in foreign countries approved to receive NIH funding.²⁴ A Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit prompted by a WCW investigation found that the NIH shipped over \$2.2 billion to foreign animal labs from 2011-2021.²⁵ Once again, the GAO found that Dr. Fauci's NIAID was responsible for 95 percent of the NIH's spending in foreign animal labs.

As the GAO noted, an NIH loophole—that WCW is currently suing to overturn—exempts taxpayer-funded foreign animal labs from adhering to the same oversight as domestic animal labs.²⁶ The GAO also wrote, “officials at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases...told us that they did not conduct foreign site visits for animal welfare purposes during that period” and that NIH, “has not conducted a site visit to a foreign facility performing NIH-funded animal research since the inception of NIH's animal welfare program in 1985.” Where is the accountability?

Another GAO audit requested by Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA) found that certain sub-grants and sub-contracts to foreign animal labs aren't even tracked in government systems.²⁷ The DOD Inspector General determined that the agency didn't adequately track money sent to foreign labs, including for dangerous animal experiments that can cause pandemics.²⁸

Just a few weeks ago, the Central Intelligence Agency joined this Committee, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Energy, and countless other experts in assessing that a lab leak at the Wuhan Institute of Virology—an animal testing lab that WCW first exposed was funded by US taxpayers—likely caused the COVID pandemic that killed 1.2 million Americans, millions more worldwide and caused trillions in economic damage to the U.S.²⁹ This is the worst case scenario for unchecked taxpayer-funded animal testing abroad.

Despite what happened in Wuhan, 26 animal labs in China are currently approved to receive NIH funding with essentially no oversight, including labs controlled by the Chinese Communist Party and with ties to the People's Liberation Army.³⁰

²⁴ <https://olaw.nih.gov/assured/app/index.html>

²⁵ <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2023/03/30/wcw-was-right-feds-find-nih-shipped-2b-to-foreign-animal-labs-with-no-oversight/>

²⁶ <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2022/01/04/new-wcw-lawsuit-close-nihs-foreign-animal-lab-loophole/>

²⁷ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-106119>

²⁸ <https://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/Article/3811820/management-advisory-review-of-dod-funds-provided-to-the-peoples-republic-of-chi/>

²⁹ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/national-security/3300820/cia-admits-covid-19-most-likely-originated-from-chinese-lab-leak/>

³⁰ <https://olaw.nih.gov/assured/app/index.html>

WCW has been following the money to these labs and recently obtained and released a contract funded by the NIH and DOD that's paying for 300 "cute" beagles a week to be restrained and injected with or force-fed experimental drugs in a Chinese lab.³¹

Continuing to send tax dollars to an authoritarian adversaries' animal labs that covered up COVID's origin is a recipe for disaster that poses serious national security risks.

Thanks to efforts led by Chairwoman Mace, Rep. Fallon and others, all Russian animal labs were cut off from U.S. taxpayer funds after WCW exposed cruel cat tests at a Kremlin-linked facility, and China's animal labs should be as well.³²

Recommendations for reforms

In view of the issue outlined above, we offer the following recommendations for reforms to save tax dollars and animals:

1. Defund harmful experiments on dogs and cats
2. Defund all animal labs in China
3. Suspend and audit all NIAID grants and contracts
4. Close the illegal NIH loophole that exempts foreign animal labs from oversight requirements
5. Reinstate EPA's animal testing phaseout plan
6. Improve transparency about spending on animal testing on government websites like USASpending.gov and NIH RePORTER

CONCLUSION

About a decade ago, the NIH awarded a Yale professor who determined that 87.5% of biomedical research—especially animal experiments—are wasteful.³³ Around the same time, he wrote in the prestigious academic publication, BMJ, "if research conducted on animals continues to be unable to reasonably predict what can be expected in humans, the public's continuing endorsement and funding of preclinical animal research seems misplaced."³⁴

³¹ <https://nypost.com/2025/01/28/us-news/defense-department-nih-collaborating-on-cruel-dog-experiments-with-chinese-labs-gop-watchdog/>

³² <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2023/apr/9/nih-cuts-funding-russian-lab-work-animal-experimen/>

³³ <https://nihrecord.nih.gov/2016/07/01/much-biomedical-research-wasted-argues-bracken>

³⁴ <https://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g3387.long>

He's right. Taxpayers shouldn't be forced to pay billions of dollars every year for outdated, cruel and dangerous animal experiments.

Many of the wasteful animal experiments exposed by WCW have already made it onto DOGE's desk and we're excited to work with you, the Administration and others to cut wasteful spending on animal experiments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.