
The Humane Society of the United States recognizes that benefit for both animals and mankind has been achieved through some scientific research and testing on animals, but that the advancement of medicine and human health has also been hindered by an overemphasis on such animal research. It recognizes that uses of animals in biomedical research, safety testing, and other programs are many and varied, and that this research and testing is not likely to end in the immediate future.

While some of the animals used in research and testing are subjected to procedures that result in only momentary discomfort, The HSUS believes that millions of laboratory animals do suffer severely and needlessly in painful experiments, resulting from exposure to noxious substances and pathogenic organisms, or from cruelty, carelessness, ignorance, and indifference. The HSUS also contends that toxicity testing on live animals, as now required by government agencies to test the safety of serums, drugs, cosmetics, and other chemicals, is often unreliable, inaccurate, and unnecessary and should be replaced as soon as possible by new methods not involving animal suffering. Existing measures intended to ensure humane treatment, including the Animal Welfare Act and its enforcement, have proven inadequate. The Animal Welfare Act should be strictly enforced. Coverage should be expanded to include all vertebrates used, protect animals undergoing the actual research and experimental process, and require prohibition of specific painful invasive procedures.

The HSUS believes that scientists and facilities using experimental animals should be held strictly accountable for their care and use and should keep animals in a manner fulfilling both physical and behavioral needs. Experiments should be rigorously planned, with proper statistical design, so as to minimize the number of animals necessary to be used to achieve reliable results and, through the administration of anesthesia and analgesics and other appropriate medication and veterinary care required, to preclude animal suffering. The HSUS believes that government agencies and relevant professional organizations should encourage and actively support efforts to eliminate animal suffering in the laboratory.

Therefore, The HSUS strongly advocates the development and application of alternative methods of research and testing, which could reduce the number of animals required, refine existing techniques and procedures so as to minimize the level of stress endured by an animal, and replace the use of laboratory animals. Refinement and reduction are interim steps toward the ultimate goal of complete replacement of animals in biomedical research and product testing.

Therefore, it is the policy of The Humane Society of the United States to use every means in its power to reduce and end the suffering of animals in biomedical research and testing laboratories by advocating the attitudes and approaches set forth in this statement.