



February 10, 2010

Board of Supervisors
Dane County
Room 118, City-County Building
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Members of the Dane County Board of Supervisors:

I am writing in response to your letter of February 5, 2010. Thank you for your interest in the important matter of animal research.

At its January 8, 2010 meeting, the All Campus Animal Care and Use Committee addressed the question of whether experimenting on non-human primates is ethical.

Dr. Robert Streiffer, a professor of philosophy and a biomedical ethicist, explained in some detail why the All Campus Animal Care and Use Committee is an appropriate body to consider this issue. Dr. Eric Sandgren, director of the UW-Madison Animal Program, informed meeting attendees that the campus considers the ethics of animal research on a case by case basis, just as the ethics of research involving humans is addressed case by case. Their reports are attached. I hope you will read them and let us know whether you have follow-up questions.

Let me address the question of self-interest, which you raised in your letter. The All-Campus Animal Care and Use Committee includes members of the public, in addition to faculty and staff from campus. The current chair of the Letters and Science Animal Care and Use Committee, Dr. Streiffer, is a professor of philosophy whose scholarship has no direct connection to any program of animal research. He is also one of the members of the All Campus Committee. Members of the committee are selected on the basis of their expertise, experience and willingness to participate in the time-consuming and complex process of overseeing and evaluating our animal programs. They are dealing with complex ethical as well as compliance and operational issues whenever they evaluate research protocols. The overriding self-interest of the committee and its members is ensuring that our programs are well run and that they comply not only with the federal rules and regulations that govern animal use in research, but also with the accepted ethical standards that guide such work.

The use of animals in research is a contentious issue and there are clearly sharp differences of opinion about it among people of goodwill. The university supports the pursuit of animal research, including non-human primate research, because of its potential to help us understand the building blocks and mechanisms of life, leading to treatments and more fundamental

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understanding of a wide-range of devastating diseases and conditions. It is appropriate and important that we reflect deeply on the ethical implications of what we do, that we acknowledge that there are conflicting views, and that we participate in ongoing societal discussions about the relationship between ourselves as human beings and other animals. This we do. I welcome any additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolyn 'Bid' Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carolyn "Bid" Martin
Chancellor

Enclosures