



2nd February 2016

Re: “Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Prohibition of Live Imports of Primates for Research)”

To whom it may concern, my name is Kirk Leech, I am writing to you as the Executive Director of the European Animal Research Association (EARA). EARA is a communications and advocacy organisation, representing both public and private research. Our mission is to uphold the interests of biomedical research and healthcare development across Europe. By providing accurate and evidence-based information on the benefits of biomedical animal research, EARA will inform, educate and unify audiences in support of research and will facilitate an open debate.

We are submitting the following letter in reference to the "Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Prohibition of Live Imports of Primates for Research) Bill 2015".

Many independent and expert enquiries, including the Weatherall Report in the United Kingdom, have concluded that there is a strong case for the use of Non-Human Primates (NHP) to advance scientific and medical knowledge and to assess the safety of new medicines. NHPs, like all animals, may be used in research where the potential medical, veterinary and scientific benefits are compelling and there is no viable alternative method. The use of animals and particularly primates is subject to careful regulation.

Primate research accounts for less than 0.05% of all animals used in research in Europe, yet their role has been central in many important medical advances. For example the development of the polio vaccine, life support systems for premature babies, and deep brain stimulation for Parkinson's disease has directly relied on research using NHPs. Currently the main areas of NHP research are infectious diseases, e.g. to develop vaccines and treatments for HIV/AIDS, Ebola and malaria; neuroscience, in which primate studies help better understand the brain and treat conditions ranging from Alzheimer's disease to schizophrenia; and reproduction, fertility and foetal research.





European Animal
Research Association

Countless numbers of patients worldwide have seen their quality of life improve thanks to innovative new medicines. Animal research and testing remains an essential part of the development of all new medicines and vaccines, to determine both the efficacy and the safety of a potential medicine. Primate studies play an important role in translational research, which builds on discoveries made in fundamental science research as well as in applied science looking more directly at causes and mechanisms of disease. It is also a regulatory requirement to demonstrate safety in animals before moving to clinical trials in humans.

The European Life Sciences sector is fully committed to the 3Rs principles of replacement, reduction and refinement. We actively seek opportunities to replace animal studies with alternative methods, to design studies that enable us to reduce the number of animals needed to obtain a scientifically valid result and to refine studies to minimise pain and distress to the animals involved. This has already resulted in a significant reduction in the numbers of animals used in recent years.

The importation of primates safeguards the health and stability of primate colonies in Australia that enable scientists to conduct vital research. If an artificial limit is placed on the importation into Australia of NHPs for research, it will limit the progress that can be made in both fundamental research and innovative medicine development. I would therefore urge you to reject the calls for such a ban.

Yours sincerely

Kirk Leech

Executive Director

European Animal Research Association



European Animal
Research Association

www.eara.eu

Hodgkin Huxley House
30 Farringdon Lane
London, EC1R 3AW

T +44 (0)20 3675 1230
F +44 (0)20 3411 7808

Registered as European Animal
Research Association
Company no. 8924697
VAT no. 184 1486 91
Registered company at the above address