



American Anti-Vivisection Society



Alternatives Research & Development  
F O U N D A T I O N

For Immediate Release:  
October 10, 2000

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## **PROTECTION OF LAB ANIMALS BLOCKED**

### **Congressional Rider Overrides Federal Court Decision and Delays Funding for New Regulations**

WASHINGTON, DC -- Just days after a federal court judge dismissed motions to intervene from animal research groups and allowed new regulations to go forward that would expand the Animal Welfare Act to include protection of rats, mice and birds, Congress is using its powers to block implementation.

Pressure from the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) and other interest groups was apparently successful in pushing through a rider to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill currently before Congress. The rider states that "none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act shall be used to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking, to promulgate a proposed rule, or to otherwise change or modify the definition of 'animal' in existing regulations pursuant to the Animal Welfare Act." This rider would be effective for one year.

"It is outrageous that NABR and its allies are acting to subvert the will of the courts and undercut a law which was clearly designed to protect animals used in research. We urge President Clinton to veto this bill," said Tina Nelson, executive director of the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS), an affiliate of Alternatives Research and Development Foundation (ARDF) which reached a historic settlement with USDA on September 28, 2000 to protect rats, mice and birds.

"Despite what this vocal minority would like you to believe, the new law is not a choice between animal protection and scientific research," said John McArdle, Ph.D., director of ARDF. "The truth is that requiring improved standards for food, water, shelter and pain relief of rats, mice and birds would affect only those testing facilities with substandard animal care. Furthermore, there are many accurate and effective alternatives to animal testing currently in use in the U.S. and in Europe. In addition, these protections do not ban animal testing – they simply require that alternatives be considered."

According to today's Baltimore Sun, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said that the department's final rules "should in no way hamper the vital work being done to ensure the continuation of our nation's vibrant scientific and medical research."

McArdle added, "This is a temporary obstacle. Our group and many within the research community remain committed to seeing these common sense reforms become reality."

ARDF was founded in 1994 to support the development and use of alternatives to laboratory animals through education and funding of related research projects. AAVS is the oldest organization working on behalf of animals used in research, testing and education in the United States.

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