Dear Dr. Brown:
On behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU), which represents 63 leading public and private research universities, I am writing to express thanks for the recent effort to reduce regulatory burden faced by Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC) [NOT-OD-11-053].

AAU strongly supports regulatory oversight that ensures high standards of animal welfare for laboratory animals used in research. AAU member universities take very seriously their responsibility to comply with federal requirements. However, the multiple agencies involved in overseeing regulatory compliance have led to unique interpretations and implementations of rules across agencies. This has made compliance difficult to manage, created inefficiencies, and increased costs. Therefore, we are grateful to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare and National Institutes of Health for harmonizing IACUC policy with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at USDA.

Reductions in regulatory burden through such harmonization efforts allow research universities to enhance their productivity and reduce compliance costs. Minimizing administrative and compliance costs ultimately will provide a cost benefit to the Federal government and to university administrators, faculty, and students by freeing up resources and time to directly support educational and research efforts.

We look forward to continuing to work with our government partners to maximize the efficient and productive use of federal research funding.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Berdahl
President
Association of American Universities