



An association of 61 leading public and private research universities

# AAU OPPOSES THE GREAT APE PROTECTION AND COST SAVINGS ACT OF 2011

The Great Ape Protection and Cost Saving Act of 2011 (S. 810/ H.R. 1513 ) would ban all life-saving research involving chimpanzees. Chimpanzees are a unique and invaluable resource for ethically conducted biomedical research, particularly translational research through which scientific discoveries are advanced into treatments and cures. The research community and AAU are committed to ensuring that such research not only conforms with ethical, legal, and safety regulations but also maintains the highest standards of animal care and health.

A 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *The Use of Chimpanzees in Biomedical and Behavioral Research: Assessing the Necessity*, stated: **“This report does not endorse an outright ban on chimpanzee research.”** It went on to say, **“Of the many animals used in research, the chimpanzees genetic proximity to humans and the resulting biological and behavioral characteristics make it a uniquely valuable species for certain types of research.”**

## AAU supports the IOM report’s recommendations.

### CHIMPANZEES ARE CRITICAL AND NECESSARY TO ADVANCE MEDICAL RESEARCH

- As stated in the IOM report, **“Chimpanzees and humans are the only two species that are susceptible to the Hepatitis C (HCV) infection.** Currently, no other suitable animal models exist for evaluation of a prophylactic HCV vaccine.” As many as **3.9 million people** in the U.S. alone are chronically infected with hepatitis C, leading to **12,000 deaths per year.** Chimpanzees were **critical to the development of vaccines** for hepatitis A and B, as well as recent breakthrough antiviral therapies for hepatitis C, and remain critical to the ongoing quest for a hepatitis C vaccine.

**“Chimpanzees have been invaluable in research that ultimately led to important advances in human health... The chimpanzee is the best validated, if not the only reliable animal model for HBV and HCV studies...In addition, various populations respond differently to current treatments. Chimpanzees will be crucial in elucidating the efficacy of new treatments that are developed to address these differences.” –NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., March 24, 2010**

- In addition, **scientists rely on chimpanzees** to study a host of other infectious diseases. These include **respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)**, which can cause severe, untreatable, and sometimes **fatal infections in infants, children, and the elderly**, leading to nearly **180,000 hospitalizations** per year; and human cytomegalovirus, which the CDC cites as the most common congenital infection in the U.S., causing **one child to become disabled per hour.** According to the IOM study, “The chimpanzee may be required in the future for testing of novel vaccines because of the ability of the chimpanzee to serve as an early surrogate model for seronegative infants.”

### USE OF CHIMPANZEES IN MEDICAL RESEARCH IS HIGHLY REGULATED

- The **welfare of animals, including chimpanzees, used in federally funded medical research is protected through a strict framework of regulations** at both the federal and institutional level. Laws and policies of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and

- Brandeis University
- Brown University
- California Institute of Technology
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Emory University
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- Iowa State University
- The Johns Hopkins University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- McGill University
- Michigan State University
- New York University
- Northwestern University
- The Ohio State University
- The Pennsylvania State University
- Princeton University
- Purdue University
- Rice University
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- Stanford University
- Stony Brook University - State University of New York
- Texas A&M University
- Tulane University
- The University of Arizona
- University at Buffalo, The State University of New York
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Irvine
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, San Diego
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- The University of Chicago
- University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Florida
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- The University of Iowa
- The University of Kansas
- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Oregon
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Rochester
- University of Southern California
- The University of Texas at Austin
- University of Toronto
- University of Virginia
- University of Washington
- The University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Vanderbilt University
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Yale University

the U.S. Department of Agriculture require that use of animals in research be justified and approved, on an experiment-by-experiment basis, by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). By law, the IACUC membership must include veterinarians and members of the public.

- The **university research community takes seriously compliance with laws and policies governing the treatment of laboratory animals, including chimpanzees.** This obligation requires effective training and education of investigators and service personnel, as well as rigorous regulation and oversight of animal research.
- The **welfare and use of animals in research is continuously monitored** to ensure the minimum number of animals is being used, that there is scientific justification for using a given species, and that animals receive humane and proper care and housing appropriate to each species. Any violation of the laws, policies, and rules governing the use of animal subjects in research carries severe penalties for the individuals and institutions involved.

### **RESEARCH THAT DIRECTLY BENEFITS GREAT APES WILL BE HARMED**

- The Great Ape Protection and Cost Savings Act would **halt all research** involving chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, bonobos, and gibbons, **including research intended to improve the health of these animals** in the wild and captivity.
- **Ebola is devastating wild populations** of chimpanzees and gorillas, having already killed nearly one-third of wild gorillas. Researchers are currently testing an Ebola vaccine designed to be used on wild gorillas and chimpanzees to protect them from extinction, studies which would be halted by this bill.
- Some species of great apes suffer unique heart conditions and neurologic degeneration in captivity. **Veterinary research designed to understand and treat these conditions**, which may be as simple as taking regular blood samples, could be disrupted by passage of this legislation.

### **IOM REPORT AND NIH ACTION**

- The IOM report, *The Use of Chimpanzees in Biomedical and Behavioral Research*, establishes a set of uniform, though restrictive, criteria to guide current and future research use of chimpanzees to treat, prevent or control public health challenges. Subsequently, NIH has adopted the report's recommendations and has set up a Working Group on the Use of Chimpanzees in NIH-Funded Research, which is developing an additional review system to ensure the use of chimpanzees in research only when absolutely necessary.

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### **Want to know more about research involving chimpanzees? Here are some answers!**

**Q. How many chimpanzees are there in research laboratories in the United States?**

A. There are approximately 1000 chimpanzees housed in less than a dozen labs throughout the United States. There is currently a moratorium on using federal funds to breed additional chimpanzees.

**Q. What happens to laboratory chimpanzees when they are no longer needed in research?**

A. Chimpanzees in the federally funded research system are provided with lifetime care in sanctuaries once they are no longer used in medical research.

**Q. How do I know that chimpanzees used in research are well cared for?**

A. The use of animals in research is highly regulated in the U.S. and includes laws, policies, and regulations through the USDA, the Public Health Service, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Included in this regulatory framework are requirements for local and federal review of experiments, surprise inspections of facilities and animals, and severe penalties for violations. For non-human primates, like chimpanzees, there are additional requirements for social housing and environmental enrichment to maintain their mental health, as well as their physical health. In addition, most research facilities undergo voluntary accreditation of their animal research programs through an independent accreditor. These systems are all designed to ensure that research animals receive the best possible care, suitable housing conditions, and alleviation of pain or distress.