

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1163

TITLE: Resolution Condemning Unethical Animal Testing at University of Florida and Nationwide

AUTHOR(S): Senator Arturo Zárrate

SPONSOR(S): Young Democratic Socialists of America Student Government Engagement Working Group Temporary Coordinator Ronin Lupien, Minority Party Leader Nathaniel Pelton, Senator Asif Islam, Senator Hunter Monson, Senator Isha Khan, Senator Meagan Lamey, Senator Raj Mia, Senator Elizabeth Insuasti, Majority Party Leader Julia Seifer

WHEREAS, the Animal Welfare Act is a federal law regulating the treatment of animals in research, testing, teaching and transport, and was signed into law in 1966 [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the law initially set minimum standards for the care of “dogs, cats, primates, rabbits, hamsters, and guinea pigs” [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the law was extended in 1970 to all warm-blooded mammals [1]; and,

WHEREAS, it has been further expanded to protect more animals and to provide further USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) regulatory oversight [1]; and,

WHEREAS, the Animal Welfare Act does not cover many common animals used in testing, such as fish, invertebrates, rats or mice [2]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2017 People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals condemned the University of Florida for contracting with Texas A&M University to conduct experiments on golden retriever puppies bred to have muscular dystrophy [3]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2017 Stop Animal Exploitation NOW! (SAEN) condemned UF practices of “cutting cats’ cerebrums, or decerebration, in a 2014 study about aspirating food or liquid, which can cause pneumonia” [4] [5]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2021 SAEN condemned UF for “accidentally setting rats on fire during surgery, subjecting a rat to increased pain and distress while undergoing traumatic brain injury research, and accidentally boiling two live rats that were still inside a cage while it was being sterilized” [5]; and,

WHEREAS, in 2022 People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has condemned UF's testing with the "Without Consent" campaign at UF [6]; and,

WHEREAS, SAEN has condemned research where "14 rats were dosed with glyphosate — an herbicide — and then subjected to 95-degree heat for eight hours. After the study, six of the rats were found dead" [7]; and,

WHEREAS, UF has implemented animal testing regulation through their Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) [8]; and,

WHEREAS, UF has been making documented strides in improving practices [8] [9]; and,

WHEREAS, cruel animal testing has been established as a common problem at multiple universities outside of allowed, regulated testing [10]; and,

WHEREAS, beagles are the most common dog tested on in the United States [11] [12]; and,

WHEREAS, a breeding facility in Virginia was found to have over 4,000 beagles intended for testing, where inspections have "found dozens of violations of federal regulations, leaving the beagles underfed, ill, injured and, in some cases, dead" [11, 13]; and,

WHEREAS, inspections of this facility also found in the facility's records that "the deaths of more than 300 beagle puppies at the facility were attributed to "unknown causes""; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of the University of Florida calls for a commitment to transparency and constant reporting by the UF IACUC on current animal testing practices.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of the University of Florida calls on Vice President of Research David Norton to ensure the University of Florida's compliance with IACUC protocols and commends the University's efforts in improving practices thus far.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of the University of Florida condemns animal testing that violates federal laws and regulations at the University of Florida.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of the University of Florida condemns animal testing that violates federal laws and regulations nationwide.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of the University of Florida is committed to the wellbeing of animals both at the University of Florida and nationwide.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution will be sent to University President Ben Sasse, IACUC Chair Kerri O'Malley, Vice President of Research David Norton, Axios journalist & UF alumni April Rubin, University of Florida Biology Department Chair Brad Barbazuk, Senator Arturo Zárrate, and Parliamentarian Emeritus Ronin Lupien, who greatly contributed to the development of this resolution.

- [1] <https://awionline.org/legislation/animal-welfare-act>
- [2] https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalwelfare/sa_awa
- [3] <https://www.peta.org/media/news-releases/u-florida-fire-ties-cruel-dog-laboratory/>
- [4] <https://www.gainesville.com/story/news/local/2017/02/04/uf-comes-under-fire-for-cutting-cat-brains/22486821007/>
- [5] <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2021/03/11/university-of-florida-animal-research-program-under-scrutiny-for-alleged-mistreatment-of-cats-lab-rats/>
- [6] <https://www.gainesville.com/story/news/2022/02/24/peta-targets-uf-animal-testing-asks-university-stop-lab-experiments/6910692001/>
- [7] <https://www.gainesville.com/story/news/2023/11/27/saen-says-uf-research-on-rats-is-barbaric-demands-end-to-project/71664991007/>
- [8] <https://iacuc.ufl.edu/about.html>
- [9] <https://www.local10.com/news/local/2023/08/08/university-of-florida-veterinary-students-learn-to-detect-document-animal-cruelty/>
- [11] <https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2022/08/26/beagles-are-news-after-decades-key-players-medical-research/>
- [12] <https://www.humanesociety.org/blog/breaking-historic-transport-approximately-4000-beagles-spared-animal-testing>
- [13] <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/12/us/envigo-beagles-breeder-adoption.html>



John Brinkman
Senate President

3/4/2024
Date