SOCIETY for NEUROSCIENCE

1121 14th Street NW
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Phone (202) 962-4000
Fax (202) 962-4941
Web SfN.org

February 6, 2015

The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
United States House of Representatives
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Roybal-Allard:

As the President of the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) and the Chair of SfN's Committee on Animals in Research (CAR), please allow us to express the Society's support for the critically important work being conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Animal models, including primates, are critical to our understanding of the brain and of what goes wrong in neurologic and psychiatric disorders and diseases. Animal models have been the basis for almost every major medical breakthrough in the last century and will continue to be for decades to come. Of course, research involving animals must be conducted humanely and should be carefully regulated. The scientific community takes these obligations seriously.

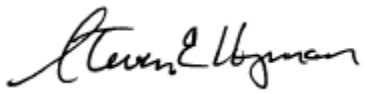
Animal models are an important part of scientific research when it is not possible to perform relevant studies in humans. Animal models, including primates, provide the basis for understanding a number of psychological and neurological conditions such as attention deficit disorder, Parkinson's disease, and dementia. Research on monkeys played a key role in the development of deep-brain stimulation for treating conditions such as Parkinson's disease and depression. These models also further our understanding of the non-invasive brain scanning approaches that are used worldwide for diagnosing diseases in humans and to study human brain functions. Research on non-human primates has not only contributed to breakthroughs in our understanding and treatment of degenerative and infectious diseases of the brain, but has also led to the development of vaccines, including polio.

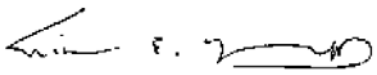
Mental illnesses are brain diseases, and understanding the genetics, anatomy, and physiology of the brain is critical for our understanding of their basis and for discovering much needed new treatments. The study of behavior is essential to combatting such disabling disorders as autism, depression, addiction, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia. Research at NIH is exploring critical questions about the interactions between genes and physical and social environments, as well as the physiology of cognitive processes, relevant to many of these conditions.

We appreciate your interest in these issues. Thank you for allowing us to add our voices to the other leading scientific and health societies who are concerned with the misunderstandings over the role carefully regulated animal studies play in medical research. We are united in conveying to the public and leading policymakers like you how this research helps improve understanding and combats a wide range of psychological diseases and disorders. If you have any questions, we would be very pleased to arrange a meeting to talk with you or your staff about responsible animal research and why it is critical to advance science and improve health.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,





Steven E. Hyman, MD
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Director, Stanley Center for Psychiatric Research
Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard
President, Society for Neuroscience

Michael E. Goldberg, MD
David Mahoney Professor of Brain and Behavior in the Departments of Neuroscience, Neurology, Psychiatry, and Ophthalmology
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February 6, 2015

The Honorable Eliot Engel
United States House of Representatives
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Engel:

As the President of the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) and the Chair of SfN's Committee on Animals in Research (CAR), please allow us to express the Society's support for the critically important work being conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Animal models, including primates, are critical to our understanding of the brain and of what goes wrong in neurologic and psychiatric disorders and diseases. Animal models have been the basis for almost every major medical breakthrough in the last century and will continue to be for decades to come. Of course, research involving animals must be conducted humanely and should be carefully regulated. The scientific community takes these obligations seriously.

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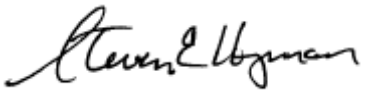

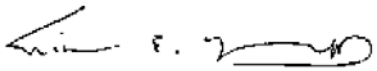

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February 6, 2015

The Honorable Sam Farr
United States House of Representatives
1126 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Farr:

As the President of the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) and the Chair of SfN's Committee on Animals in Research (CAR), please allow us to express the Society's support for the critically important work being conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Animal models, including primates, are critical to our understanding of the brain and of what goes wrong in neurologic and psychiatric disorders and diseases. Animal models have been the basis for almost every major medical breakthrough in the last century and will continue to be for decades to come. Of course, research involving animals must be conducted humanely and should be carefully regulated. The scientific community takes these obligations seriously.

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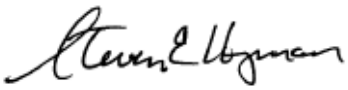

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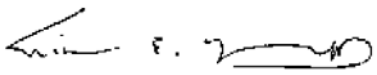

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February 6, 2015

The Honorable Dina Titus
United States House of Representatives
401 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Titus:

As the President of the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) and the Chair of SfN's Committee on Animals in Research (CAR), please allow us to express the Society's support for the critically important work being conducted at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Animal models, including primates, are critical to our understanding of the brain and of what goes wrong in neurologic and psychiatric disorders and diseases. Animal models have been the basis for almost every major medical breakthrough in the last century and will continue to be for decades to come. Of course, research involving animals must be conducted humanely and should be carefully regulated. The scientific community takes these obligations seriously.

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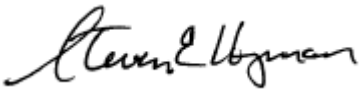

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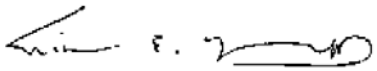

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