



August 31, 2017

A Message from the NABR President on Hurricane Harvey

On behalf of the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR), I extend our sincerest compassion and sympathy to our members, and network of biomedical research staff who have been affected by Hurricane Harvey. We are keeping you, your colleagues, families, and friends in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

A special note of recognition for the “ride-out” teams who have cared for the animals housed in research facilities affected by the storm: Thank you for your professionalism, leadership, and bravery. Please do not hesitate to contact me or reach out to NABR staff for support in the coming weeks. Our friends at the American Veterinary Medical Association have provided [excellent resources on disaster relief](#) for the animal health industry, and we encourage you to review them.

It is truly inspiring to see the demonstrations of solidarity from the biomedical research community in Texas, as well as the many volunteers from across the country. Several hundred researchers have offered their support for research animal colonies [via a public database](#) that can be read about in [The Scientist](#). Another great way to support those devastated by the hurricane is by donating to the [American Red Cross](#).

All of us at NABR are grateful to be part of such a strong and supportive community.

-Matthew Bailey, NABR President

White Coat Waste PAC Makes First Contributions to Members of Congress

As reported in a recent *NABR Update*, the White Coat Waste (WCW) Project formed “the first and only Political Action Committee (PAC) supporting candidates for U.S. Congress who are committed to stopping \$15 billion in wasteful government spending on animal experiments.” NABR has just learned through Federal Election Commission reports that the [White Coat Waste PAC made its first contribution of \\$2,500.00](#) to Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA), sponsor of [H.R. 816, the FACT Act](#), a bill that would virtually eliminate dog research at the Veterans Administration. Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings also show the [WCW PAC has supported](#) Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) and Reps. Dave Brat (R-VA), Brian Mast (R-FL), and Dina Titus (D-NV) all of whom support the FACT Act and are listed as cosponsors of [H.R. 3197, the PUPPERS Act](#), which would prohibit the Veterans Administration (VA) from conducting Category D or E studies with canines. The FACT Act and PUPPERS Act are two of WCW’s legislative priorities.

[WCW PAC reportedly has \\$17,547.14 cash on hand](#) after expenses, including their contribution to Calvert. Nine individual donors contributed a total of \$19,500.00. Journalist Jane-Velez Mitchell and three others donated \$5,000.00 each.

Attention Maryland Research Facilities: ‘We’re Going to Make Them Uncomfortable So They Can Feel the Squeeze’ Says Beagle Freedom Bill Sponsor

Legislation that would require animal research institutions to work with third party adoption organizations to find homes for dogs and cats after studies are complete is likely to return in Maryland’s next legislative session. [Senate Bill 420](#) and [House Bill 528](#) were introduced in the Maryland State Legislature in 2017, and both bills failed to pass their respective chambers before the legislative session adjourned in April.

According to [a recent story in Maryland Matters](#), the Beagle Freedom Project (BFP) hosted a table at the Maryland Association of Counties conference earlier this month in Ocean City, MD. BFP was joined by what they described as a former laboratory beagle named George Washington, an animal the group has used in publicity, advertising, social media, and public relations campaigns over the past several months. The coverage reads, “George is a living symbol of a renewed legislative push by animal-rights activists to change state law to enable dogs and cats who are used for research to be adopted by families when their service is over – if they are sufficiently healthy.”

Advocates of the bill also recently released a digital campaign titled, [“Let My Puppies Go.”](#) in which biomedical researchers are compared to slaveholding Egyptian pharaohs. An online petition in support of the bills has collected [more than 38,000 signatures](#) at the time of this writing. Delegate Benjamin Kramer, sponsor of H.B.528, told *Maryland Matters*: “We’re going to make them uncomfortable so they can feel the squeeze.”

In 2017 similar bills failed to pass in Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, North Dakota, and Texas. Legislation is still pending consideration in Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. However, the Governor of Illinois, Bruce Rauner (R), signed [S.B.1884](#) into law last week. Illinois joins California, Connecticut, Illinois, Minnesota, Nevada, and New York, which have enacted similar measures.

This week’s news about renewed interest in and lobbying activities surrounding research animal adoption laws in Maryland should serve as a warning to NABR members and community members across the country. NABR expects several “Beagle Freedom Bills” will be introduced in additional states during the 2018 legislative session, and member institutions must be ready to voice their concerns. Please check your inbox for future updates from NABR on state legislation. To view our [legislative tracking chart](#) and research animal adoption toolkit, [please click here](#).

Tomorrow is International Primate Day

Tomorrow is recognized by animal rights groups as [“International Primate Day.”](#) an annual “holiday” observed by activists who seek to stop the use of nonhuman primates in research. Primate Day was started in 2005 by [Animal Defenders International \(ADI\)](#), an animal rights non-profit group founded in 1990 “to educate, create awareness, and promote the interest of humanity in the cause of justice, and the suppression of all forms of cruelty to animals; wherever possible, to alleviate suffering, and to conserve and protect animals and their environment.”

If your institution houses nonhuman primates, please be aware of possible on-site or nearby protests and gatherings and notify your security team. Do not hesitate to reach out to staff at NABR at info@nabr.org or [202-857-0540](tel:202-857-0540) for guidance or support if your institution is targeted.