

# NORTH HILLS ANIMAL HOSPITAL



Compassionate Affordable Animal Care

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To,  
Senator Barbara A Mikulski,  
Appropriations Committee,  
United State Senate,  
Room S128, The Capitol,  
Washington DC 20510

April 24<sup>th</sup> 2014

Sub: Full Committee Hearing: Driving Innovation through Federal Investments April 29<sup>th</sup> 2014

Dear Senator Mikulski and Appropriations Committee members,

Greetings.

I am a veterinarian from Georgia with multidisciplinary background. The purpose of this written testimony is to ensure 'subject areas specialists' are enlisted to maximize the outcomes from federal investments.

We would enlist engineers in technology, MDs in human subject areas to ensure the quality of work produced. Similarly it would make sense to invest in veterinarians in animal subject area. However we currently do not enlist veterinarians proportional to the animal subject area investments in Science and Technology, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Department of Defense. Furthermore even the USDA investments are not proportional to the animal production receipts.

I am enclosing evidence of disproportionate investments illustration from NIH obtained from their office using Freedom of Information Act. Just to summarize 'our analysis of data showed a) 35% research grant money on human subjects to MDs and 0.8 % of animal subjects research funding to DVMs b) similarly among training grants in respective areas 48.12 % to MDs and 1.12 % to DVMs c) among reviewers 23.55 % were MDs and 0.85% were DVMs'. NIH funding is more to dentists compared to veterinarians, and dentists cover one part of our body that has relatively less scope. This trend would have been extended to other areas and similar over the years among all federal investments including Department of Defense Bioterrorism.

Evidence of 'ill effects' of not enlisting Veterinarians in animal subject area investments can be seen in the following dogma.

- Significant percentage of 'In Vivo' studies fail to be validated in clinical trials leading to enormous costs and dearth of clinical resources
- Signal transduction studies on one gene like 'RAS' family took 30 years with jury still out on the outcomes as many of the drugs do not seem to pass the post market analysis and multiple pathways are interfering 'in vivo'. Imagine 1000 gene targets for a single disease as enumerated by NIH Director. Without veterinarian led multidisciplinary real 'in vivo' studies it would be difficult to ensure outcomes
- In vivo by definition has changed so much that we forgot relevance of multidisciplinary microenvironment by investing in cell culture and genetically compromised animal models. Only veterinarians can rescue the situation
- Zoonotic diseases war is not fought on frontlines namely 'animal institutions'. CDC did not realize the importance of finding West Nile Virus in mosquitoes and animals in Dallas even after leading the project for more than a decade. We all know what happened after that.
- USA is not prepared for exploitation of neither the meat production requirement explosion in developing world nor the resulting environmental protection needs
- Biological 'Bin Ladens' from rogue states can go undetected
- USDA does not invest proportional to receipts or future needs
- USDA will not limit the internal funding ratio on par with NIH policies for internal funding
- Animal subjects study specialists are DVMs similar to MDs on human subject area studies- we will continue to ignore this fact.
- Current protocols in animal testing for FDA are more than 60 years old. Since then a lot happened. Could be done by increasing retrospective understanding of why and how enormous percentage of promising compounds and targets fail. Currently we do not learn from our mistakes and do not use veterinarians to maximize outcomes.

I would like request the Appropriations Committee to enforce enlistment of subject area specialists in all animal subject area investments to maximize the outcomes.

Please contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely

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