



Department for
Science, Innovation
& Technology

Andrew Griffith MP
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Cat Smith MP, Chair Petitions Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

23rd February 2024

Dear Cat,

I am writing to inform you of policy announcements made during the debate on e-petitions 633591 and 645885, relating to animal testing and non-animal research methods, held at Westminster Hall on 19th February 2024.

The use of animals in science is a sensitive issue, and one that has long been the subject of debate. The government is clear that we must work towards ending the practice of animal testing. The UK is world-leading in the development of replacement non-animal methods, and the government is keen to ensure that they are utilised wherever possible. However, the technology is not yet at the stage at which it can wholly replace animal testing.

The government already provides significant funding for the development of these technologies through UKRI, primarily to the National Centre for the Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement of the use of animals in research (NC3Rs). However, more can be done to speed up the development of non-animal methods. Therefore, I have requested that we double our investment in research to achieve these approaches next year. The investment will reach £20m across the system in 2024/25.

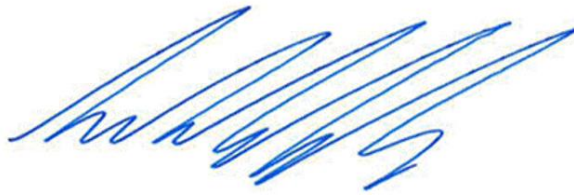
In addition to this, the government will be publishing a plan to accelerate the development, validation, and uptake of technologies and methods to reduce reliance on the use of animals in science. This will be led by a cross-government group that will consult stakeholders in industry, academia, and charities to develop a detailed plan, which will be published in the summer.

We will also restart the public attitudes to animal research survey, which was unfortunately delayed by the pandemic. The next survey will take place in the coming months, and the results will be published this autumn.

Furthermore, the Home Office has agreed to increase the licence fees required to perform regulated procedures involving animals. The Home Office will also review the duration of these licences to ensure they are appropriate.

I hope you find this information useful.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Griffith', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Andrew Griffith MP

Minister for Science, Research and Innovation