

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

7/20/83

ON THE IMPROVED STANDARDS FOR LABORATORY ANIMALS ACT  
BEFORE THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO CHAIR TODAY'S HEARING ON S. 657, A BILL INTRODUCED AS AN AMENDMENT TO THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT, TO HELP ENSURE A MORE HUMANE AND UNIFORM APPROACH TO THE TREATMENT OF LAB ANIMALS. I WELCOME SENATOR MELCHER, WHO CONTRIBUTED SOME VALUABLE SUGGESTIONS IN DRAFTING THE LANGUAGE AND THANK HIM FOR HIS SUPPORT. THIS ISSUE HAS HAD INCREASING VISIBILITY IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE OVER THE YEARS AND MANY RECENT LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES HAVE PRODUCED A VARIETY OF IDEAS FOR CORRECTING WHAT MANY CITIZENS FEEL ARE INEQUITIES IN THE CARE, TREATMENT AND PRACTICES OF USING RESEARCH ANIMALS.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, LAST SESSION I INTRODUCED S. 2948, WHICH WOULD HAVE MANDATED RESEARCH FACILITIES TO BE ACCREDITED WITH A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE COSTS OF UPGRADING VARIOUS STRUCTURAL CHANGES. I HAVE RECEIVED COMMENTS BY SOME WHO ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN INSPECTING RESEARCH FACILITIES THAT WE SHOULD IMPLEMENT SUCH ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.

THIS BILL DOES NOT REQUIRE INVESTIGATIONS BY ANY OUTSIDE GROUP BUT INSTEAD WORKS WITHIN THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT. THIS BILL DOES NOT REQUIRE MAJOR EXPENSES BE INVESTED IN UPGRADING



## STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF A FACILITY.

### SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS I WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS TO CLEAR UP ANY CONFUSION WHICH MIGHT EXIST. BY REGULATION, THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT EXCLUDES BIRDS, RATS AND MICE AND DOMESTIC FARM ANIMALS. THIS BILL DOES NOT CHANGE THESE EXCLUSIONS.

THIS BILL CALLS FOR NO FUNDING OF ALTERNATIVE METHODS. IT DOES ASK THAT WHERE PRACTICAL, SUCH PRACTICES BE CONSIDERED. I UNDERSTAND THAT IN MANY SITUATIONS, THE ALTERNATIVE METHODS HAVE NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY DEVELOPED TO REPLACE ANIMALS. YET THE PUBLIC DOES WANT SCIENTISTS TO HAVE ALL POSSIBLE ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE METHODS TO USE WHERE PRACTICAL. MY BILL ENCOURAGES THIS THROUGH THE INFORMATION SERVICE ESTABLISHED AT THE USDA'S NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE.

THE BILL WOULD ALSO ESTABLISH AN ANIMAL STUDIES COMMITTEE WITHIN EACH INSTITUTION CONSISTING OF A MINIMUM OF THREE PEOPLE, INCLUDING AN OUTSIDE PERSON NOT RELATED TO THE FACILITY, TO REVIEW ONGOING CARE, TREATMENT AND PRACTICES OF THE FACILITY. ONE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE IS TO ASSURE THAT ANIMAL PAIN AND DISTRESS ARE MINIMIZED. THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT HAVE ANY VETO POWER AND WOULD BE CHOSEN BY THE INSTITUTION ITSELF. IN THOSE CASES WHERE THE INSTITUTION HAS A LARGE COMMITTEE, SEVERAL TIMES THE MINIMUM NUMBER, IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT



EVERYONE ON THE COMMITTEE INSPECT THE FACILITIES. A MINIMUM OF THREE, INCLUDING THE VETERINARIAN AND THE OUTSIDE MEMBER IF HE IS AVAILABLE, WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS BILL.

THIS BILL DOES NOT CALL FOR THE OUTSIDE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE TO BE AN ANIMAL "RIGHTS" ACTIVIST. BUT THE MEMBER SHOULD BE SOMEONE WHO IS AWARE OF THE GENERAL COMMUNITY'S CONCERNS REGARDING ANIMAL WELFARE.

THE BILL DOES ALLOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO REVIEW THE PRACTICES OF THE FACILITY DURING EXPERIMENTATION. IT PRESERVES THE INSTITUTION'S RIGHTS TO DESIGN THEIR OWN EXPERIMENTS.

FOLLOWING MY STATEMENT I WILL INCLUDE IN THE HEARING RECORD A COMPARISON OF HOW MY BILL DIFFERS FROM THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT.

#### A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH

I'VE RECEIVED LETTERS BOTH IN SUPPORT AND IN OPPOSITION TO ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATION. A REPEATED COMMENT IS THAT ALTHOUGH IT'S IMPORTANT TO TREAT ANIMALS HUMANELY, WE MUST NOT IMPEDE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. INDEED, HUMANE TREATMENT OF LAB ANIMALS WILL YIELD BETTER SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AND A GREATER RETURN ON THE MONEY SPENT FOR RESEARCH.

I BELIEVE MY BILL REPRESENTS A RESPONSIBLE AND LOGICAL APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THE PUBLIC'S LEGITIMATE CONCERNS. IT'S CERTAINLY NOT



MY INTENT TO ELIMINATE ANIMALS FROM SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. WE'VE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO DISCOVER MANY OF THE "MIRACLE CURES" FOR VARIOUS DISEASES BY USING ANIMALS. HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC'S CONCERN IS THAT WE CAN DO A BETTER JOB IN CARING FOR THE ANIMALS WE EXPERIMENT WITH AND MINIMIZING THEIR PAIN AND DISTRESS. 19 OTHER SENATORS AGREE WITH ME AND HAVE COSPONSORED THIS BILL.