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Dear Drs. Pickar, Henderson, Meeker, Niles, and McCarthy:

As an advocate of viable medical research, I am astonished to learn the Palmer Center for Chiropractic Research invested \$4 million, including \$1.3 million in taxpayer dollars, in a new animal experimentation laboratory. More than 80% of U.S. medical schools now utilize human-focused teaching tools, yet Palmer regresses to anecdotal data from cats and rodents.

Palmer will subject 140 rats and roughly 600 cats to “ground-breaking chiropractic studies” over five years. There is nothing “ground-breaking” about fatal spinal experiments. In fact, one study allegedly recommended the use of scissors to sever front legs and tails in over 100 rats.

Old-fashioned animal experiments do not advance chiropractic medicine. Size, location, texture and elasticity of feline organs are incongruous with humans. Skeletal structures of bipeds and quadrupeds differ immensely.

Lab variables such as pain, injury, confinement, loneliness and repeated handling generate misleading data. Findings published in Contemporary Topics in Laboratory Animal Science show researchers are unable to separate the effects of stress hormones.

Chiropractic theory evolved from study of the human form — not animal form. Recognition within the scientific community of the anatomical, physiological, genetic and psychological disparities between species has inspired growth in non-animal systems. Some progressive tools include human cell-line tests, tissue cultures, clinical/epidemiological studies, virtual organs, mathematical models, and advanced MRI imaging.

Invasive animal experiments do not benefit chiropractic patients or provide applicable skills. They do, however, numb researchers to pain and suffering. I respectfully ask Palmer Center for Chiropractic Research to embrace modern, animal-free research methods that are more humane and pertinent to human health.

Thank you,