

Honorable Representative

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Senators

The U.S. Senate, U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative and Senators:

The Great Ape Protection Act, HR 1326, is back on the legislative schedule. Please support this bill to ban experimentation on great apes.

I respectfully ask my Representative to cosponsor HR 1326, which was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. I encourage my Senators to introduce and endorse a companion bill that also terminates federal funding for usage, breeding, and transport of great apes in invasive research.

The Great Ape Protection Act (GAPA) stipulates permanent retirement of all federally controlled great apes — chimpanzees, bonobos, gorillas, orangutans, and gibbons — who have undergone invasive experiments. Austria, the United Kingdom, Sweden, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Japan already forbid or restrict research on great apes. The United States should too.

Old-fashioned animal experiments often prove inapplicable to human health. For example, researchers recognize chimpanzees do not contract human AIDS or develop its clinical symptoms. Nonetheless, chimps are isolated for decades, just to see what might happen if infected with human HIV.

Taxpayers have subsidized physiological, biomedical and behavioral research on great apes since the 1950s. These redundant studies have failed to produce tangible data for AIDS, Alzheimer's, stroke, cancer, and other diseases. Given the accessibility of equivalent non-animal technologies, any facility that still uses primates is a disgrace.

In laboratories, electrodes are lodged in primates' brains and spinal cords. Seizures and infections are artificially induced. Toxic substances are injected. Babies are forcibly separated from "breeding" monkeys. In a world defined by metal bars and cement floors, animals display aberrant behaviors such as repetitive banging, spitting, and feces smearing.

Renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall has shown that primates form social unions and experience complex emotions. It is time to retire these sentient creatures and keep pace with worldwide use of non-animal modalities. I urge my elected officials to advocate passage of the Great Ape Protection Act.

Thank you,