Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 21, 2015

The Honorable Francis S. Collins
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Collins,

Thank you for your important work in critical biomedical and behavioral research.

We were pleased to learn of your decision to end controversial and expensive psychological experiments on infant monkeys at the National Institutes of Health's Poolesville, MD laboratory, and to completely wind down operations at the facility by 2018.

We understand that there are approximately 300 young and adult monkeys currently housed at this laboratory. We believe the responsible next step is to transfer them to appropriate sanctuaries, rather than sending them to other laboratories, where they would likely be subjected to years of additional experiments at significant expense to taxpayers.

As you know, for many years Congress and several Presidents have supported allowing federally-owned primates to be sent to sanctuaries. In 2000, a bipartisan bill was signed into law establishing a federal sanctuary for chimpanzees retired from research. In 2013, President Obama signed into law language that allowed more flexibility for NIH to fund the retirement of chimpanzees to the federal sanctuary system. Your decision last month to retire all federally-owned chimpanzees to sanctuaries demonstrates NIH's commitment to providing refuge to primates previously used in experiments. We applaud this decision.

It is our expectation that the federally-owned monkeys being spared from the experiments in Poolesville will also be retired to appropriate sanctuaries.

Please advise us as to whether this is the case, as we would like to be helpful to you in ensuring that this takes place in a timely manner, without exception or delay.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Brendan F. Boyle
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Lucille Roybal-Allard
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

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