# Research Needs Congressional Support

The American Physiological Society (APS) urges Congress to continue providing robust support for biomedical research. Decades of investment in the research enterprise have built a strong foundation for the development of new and improved treatments for many diseases, including vaccines and therapies for COVID-19. Animal studies have played and continue to play a critical role in the development of measures to prevent, treat, and cure disease.

The progress we have made through investment in research is jeopardized when public confidence in science falters. Trust in science has eroded over time, leaving the public vulnerable to cynical arguments by activists who seek to undermine public confidence in the validity of biomedical research involving animals. We urge Congress to reject anti-science arguments and to affirm the crucial role animal studies play in the prevention and treatment of disease.

## Research with animals is critical to medical, veterinary, and scientific progress

- Because animals are biologically similar to humans, lessons learned from animal studies can be applied to human health problems. The environment of animals can be controlled in ways that would be impossible for people.
- Before research proposals involving animals are approved, they are scrutinized for scientific merit and ethical considerations. Treating research animals humanely is a legal and ethical imperative, and it is essential for rigorous science.
- Researchers spend a significant amount of time and resources on paperwork and administrative requirements related to grants and other compliance matters. We support Congressional language directing the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to prioritize reducing this administrative burden.
- Translational studies to test the safety and effectiveness of a new treatment are the last step before human clinical trials. Large animals such as dogs, cats, pigs and monkeys are crucial in translational research because their organs and systems are physiologically more similar to humans than those of rats or mice.
- Biomedical researchers use a variety of experimental approaches to answer questions. Some of these approaches involve animals, while others do not. Last year the NIH's Advisory Committee to the Director convened a Working Group on Catalyzing the Development and Use of Novel Alternative Methods (NAMs) to Advance Biomedical Research. That Working Group recently presented its final report, detailing areas where the development of NAMs might further complement research with animals.

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