

Alan I. Leshner
Chief Executive Officer and
Executive Publisher, *Science*

October 25, 2005

The Honorable Thad Cochran
U.S. Senate
113 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cochran:

As you prepare to consider the conference agreement to the FY 2006 Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we understand that you will be addressing language in the Senate version (SA 1729) that would prohibit colleges, universities, and other research institutions that lawfully purchase research animals from Class B dealers from receiving any funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), we urge you to remove the language as it will deny funds to entire institutions involved in cutting edge research unrelated to animals.

In 1990, both the AAAS Board of Directors and Council issued a resolution stating that “the use of animals has been and continues to be essential not only in applied research with direct clinical applications in humans and animals, but also in [basic] research that furthers the understanding of biological processes.” Furthermore, we support “appropriate regulations and adequate funding to promote the welfare of animals in laboratory or field situations and deplores any violations of those regulations.”

Should SA 1729 become law, the unintended consequences are very serious. Not only would research that benefits both human health and the U.S. economy be disrupted, but many of our nation’s outstanding agriculture schools, located at state colleges and land grant universities, would be deprived of USDA funding used for research, education, and extension services in many other fields (e.g., crop science, nutrition, invasive species).

Further, the USDA licenses some vendors as both Class A (animals bred for research) and Class B (random source) dealers. Under the language in the Senate bill, institutions would be required to forgo the purchase of any animals from these vendors, lest they lose their USDA and FDA funding.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), founded in 1848, is the world’s largest general scientific society, and publisher of the journal, *Science*. The Association

has long been a powerful voice in the science community for the responsible use of animals in research. However, we believe that continued progress in science, agriculture, nutrition, and medicine requires the use of animals, and therefore we urge you to support the removal of amendment SA 1729 from the FY 2006 Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Should you or your staff wish to discuss these matters further with AAAS, please contact Deborah Runkle at 202.326.6794 or drunkle@aaas.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan I. Leshner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alan I. Leshner