

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2015

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

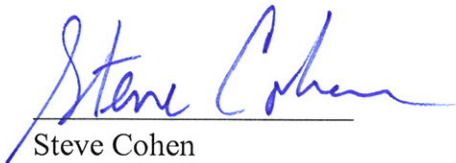
As you are aware, on January 19, 2015, the *New York Times* published the article, "U.S. Research Lab Lets Livestock Suffer in Quest for Profit." The article highlights the experimentation done on farm animals at taxpayer expense at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center. Cows, sheep and pigs have undergone torturous experimentation and have suffered painful, often fatal, neglect including starvation. The research in question has been done to maximize profits for agribusiness but at a terrible cost and with no real benefit. The experimentation has been for naught and the animals have suffered and died needlessly. The taxpayers have paid nearly \$200 million between 2006 and 2015 for research at the MARC facility, research done for the benefit of private entities but which has not even produced meaningful and useful results.

While we appreciate that you have directed USDA staff to create and deliver an updated Animal Welfare Strategy plan within 60 days, we urge you not to wait to stop the research at MARC. The American public is increasingly aware of where its food comes from and is concerned about animal treatment, especially in the production of food. The call for more humanely produced food becomes louder each day. We are writing to urge the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to immediately stop animal testing at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) in Nebraska until a full review is completed and new animal welfare protocols are implemented.

Further, we are asking the USDA to voluntarily comply with Animal Welfare Act standards as has been done by many other U.S. Government departments and agencies such as the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services, which includes the Centers for Disease Control and The National Institutes of Health.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

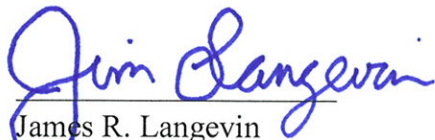
Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



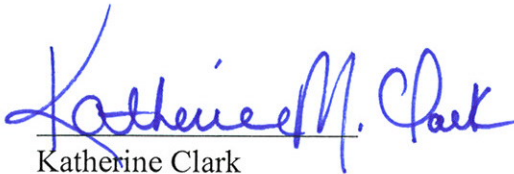
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



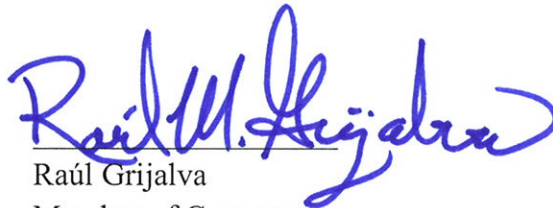
Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



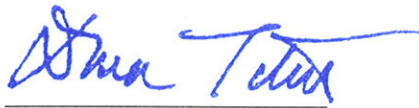
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



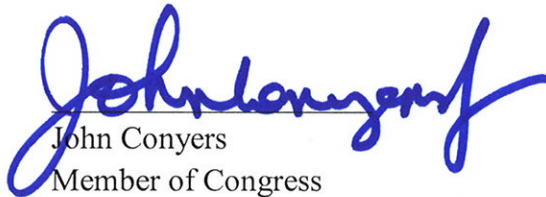
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



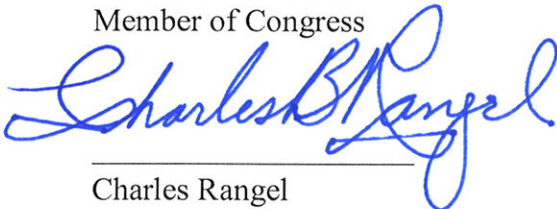
Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



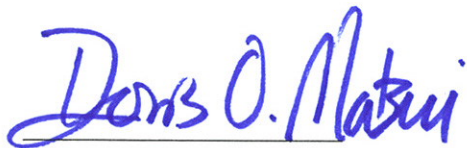
John Conyers
Member of Congress



Charles Rangel
Member of Congress



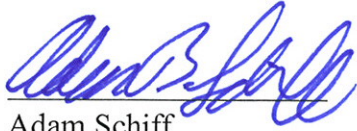
Theodore Deutch
Member of Congress



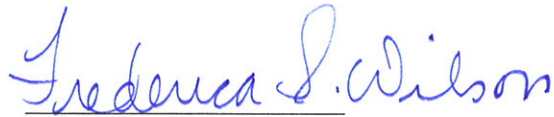
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



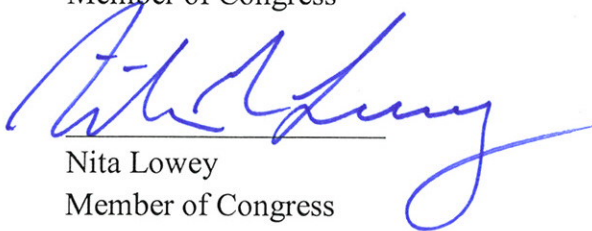
Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



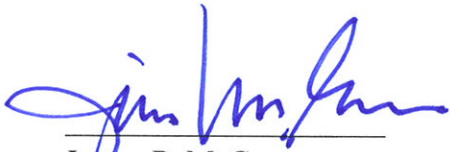
Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress



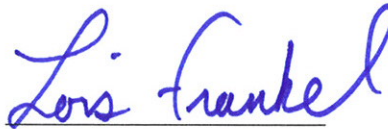
Nita Lowey
Member of Congress



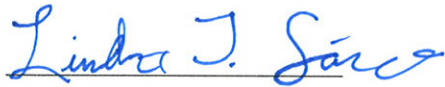
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress




Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



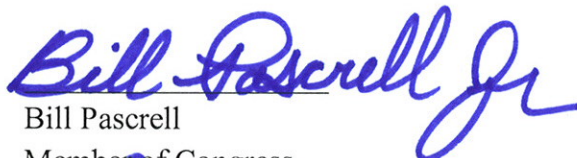
Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress



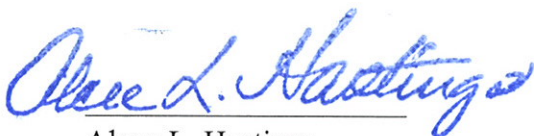
David Cicilline
Member of Congress



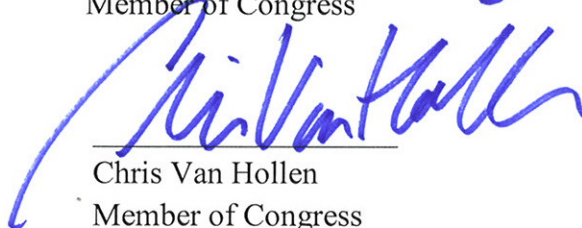
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell
Member of Congress



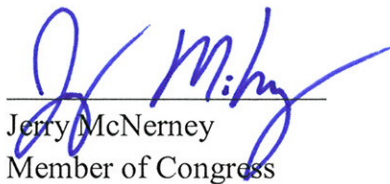
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



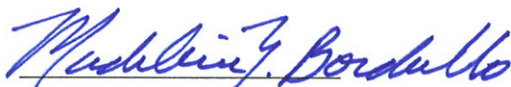
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



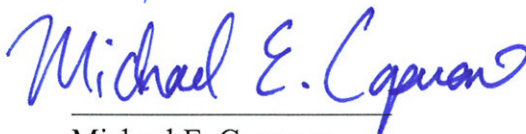
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



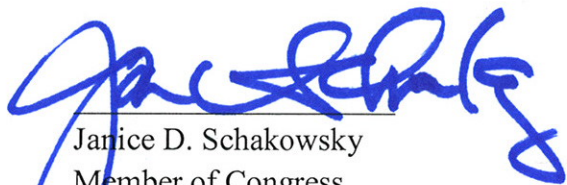
Tony Cardenas
Member of Congress



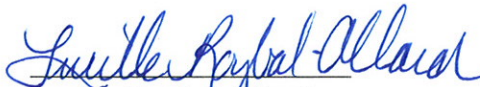
Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



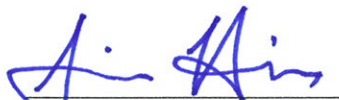
Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



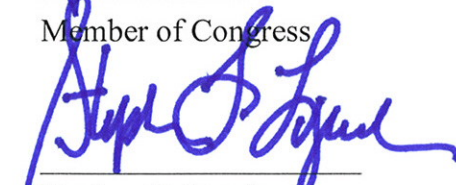
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



James A. Himes
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



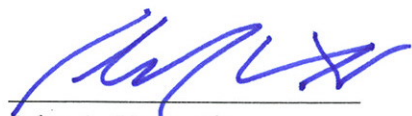
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



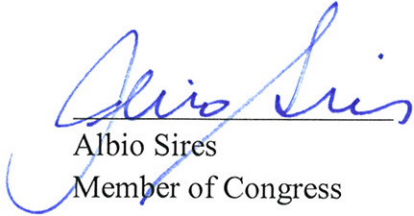
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress