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(U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)

June 21, 2016

James B. Comey
Director
U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigations
935 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Director Comey,

It has come to my attention that on May 24, 2016, the FBI entered into a \$21,623 contract with Assessment and Training Solutions Consulting Corporation (ATSCC) for a “(3) Day Tactical First Responder Training Course Utilizing Live Patient Models.”¹

I am concerned because in these courses, “live patient models” sometimes refers to the use of live animals in which they are intentionally maimed to cause traumatic injuries. For instance, media reports state that animals used by this particular contractor are “shot, stabbed, or inflicted with other wounds.”² It has also come to my attention that ATSCC was recently issued a cease-and-desist by Virginia authorities for years of apparent violations of local zoning ordinances and its federal contract terms related to animal use in courses contracted by government agencies.³

You may be aware that leading medical researchers from the Department of Defense and other entities have determined that the use of animals for emergency medical training is unnecessary, expensive, and inferior when compared to training using high-tech human simulation mannequins. Many areas of the government—including military facilities and the State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security—have discontinued animal use for these reasons. I am cosponsoring a bipartisan bill (HR 1095) that would end this wasteful practice. As a fellow attorney, you might be interested to learn that, among many other organizations, it is supported by the New York City Bar Association.⁴

¹ <https://www.usaspending.gov/transparency/Pages/TransactionDetails.aspx?RecordID=16118700-9898-4B0C-9CA6-DE1ACCA1D024&AwardID=51435210&AwardType=C>

² <http://wtkr.com/2015/11/25/city-leaders-suffolk-land-cannot-be-used-for-military-trauma-training-without-proper-permits/>

³ <https://localtvwtkr.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/foia-102815-gala-john-janota.pdf>

⁴ <http://www2.nycbar.org/pdf/report/uploads/20072861-BestPracticesActdealingwiththeuseofanimalsinmilitarytraining.pdf>

Based on these concerns, I have the following questions:

- Can you please tell me whether “live patient models” in the aforementioned training contracted by the FBI refers to the use of live animals? If so, please also answer the following questions:
 - What specifically will be done to them and for what purpose? How many will be used and what species?
 - What offices within your agency were responsible for reviewing, approving and commissioning this activity?
 - What specific processes and information were used to determine that simulation could not meet the agency’s training needs?
 - How many students will participate in the training and what is their role at the FBI?
 - How many times has the FBI contracted for such courses in the last five years? Please break down by year.

- Was your agency aware of ATSCC’s recent apparent violations of laws and contract terms? If so, when were you notified and by whom?

I am grateful for your cooperation in investigating this matter and look forward to your response.

As always, I remain,
Most sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress