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May 23, 2001

Dr. Ron DeHaven
Deputy Administrator
Animal Care Unit
USDA-APHIS
4700 River Road
Suite 2D-04, Unit 97
Riverdale, MD 20737

Dear Dr. DeHaven,

As you know, there is widespread support within the animal protection community for the USDA's proposed changes to the regulation of research animal pain and distress under the Animal Welfare Act. We suspect there is also considerable support within the scientific community for the proposal, but few scientists feel comfortable speaking out in favor of sensible reforms to the AWA regulations in today's polarized climate.

The HSUS and many other animal groups have urged the USDA to move forward with its plans to define "distress" and to change the pain and distress classification system so that it more accurately reflects the pain and distress levels that animals actually experience. These changes, when implemented, will facilitate the AWA goal of eliminating unnecessary pain and distress in animal research and testing.

The HSUS respectfully requests the opportunity to meet with you to discuss several aspects of the pain and distress issue, including the current status of the comment review process. We will be joined by a representative from the American Humane Association. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Andrew Rowan, D. Phil.

Promoting the protection of all animals

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