

October 8, 2020

Dr. Doon Gibbs
Laboratory Director
Brookhaven National Laboratory
P.O. Box 5000
Upton, New York, 11973
Via email: gibbs@bnl.gov

Dear Dr. Gibbs,

On behalf of Rise for Animals (Rise; formerly the New England Anti-Vivisection Society), including our membership in New York, I am writing to relay our concern regarding troubling evidence of animal suffering taking place at Brookhaven National Laboratory (Brookhaven) and to respectfully ask that you consider ending the experiments causing this suffering.

Document We Reviewed

In formulating the recommendation below, Rise reviewed the 2020 Program Description of the Animal Care and Use Program for AAALAC International, which was obtained by Rise through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Finding: Rodents are Suspended by Their Tails for Irradiation Experiment

The document we reviewed reveals that in an approved protocol at Brookhaven, rodents are suspended by their tails for three to five days in preparation for restraints used in irradiation experiments. While suspended by their tails, these animals are checked for signs of stress. While Brookhaven outlines various criteria to determine whether these animals are stressed, we believe those criteria are inadequate. Hanging rodents by their tails for extended periods of time—over multiple days—is inherently stressful, painful, and potentially dangerous for these animals, because it can injure their tails and spines.

Request: Terminate Funding for Irradiation Experiments

While this test may have been conducted in compliance with existing Animal Welfare laws and regulations, that should not be the minimum standard for animal welfare under your leadership at Brookhaven. This inherently stressful and painful experiment may have been tolerated in the past at your institution, but the suffering inherent to this crude research warrants your intervention to immediately end cruel radiation experiments that require tail suspension at Brookhaven, and to enact a policy against allowing the funding of any similar research protocols in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nathan Herschler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nathan Herschler
Executive Director