



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

May 23, 2024

Ms. Shriya Swaminathan  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals  
1536 16th Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Ms. Swaminathan:

Thank you for your letter dated 9 April 2024 regarding the Navy's use of animals in decompression sickness research.

The Navy shares your goal of replacing animal research models with alternative models. The Department's research and development efforts and interactions with industry, academia, and international partners ensure that we continue to remain on the cutting edge of medical intervention, discovery, and development and build upon the refinement, reduction, and replacement of animal models. These efforts have led to medical interventions that help ensure our Sailors are better protected to routinely operate in dangerous environments.

The Navy research and development programs that include both medical and operational aspects, adopt the highest standards of animal care ensuring intramural and extramural institutions are held accountable through expert intrinsic veterinary oversight, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee as well as accreditation through the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International. Additionally, the Navy research and development Animal Care and Use Committees along with the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's Veterinary Research Protection Program examine and assess proposals where animals are used to ensure that we refine, reduce, and replace the use of animals in research when all research objectives can be achieved with appropriate and validated methods.

Thank you for your interest and continued support toward our medical research efforts to ensure that our Service Members benefit from the latest medical discoveries. The United States Navy will continue to prioritize the ethical treatment of animals in all our studies and continue to refine, reduce, and replace animal use wherever practical.

Sincerely,

  
Carlos Del Toro