



December 19, 2024

George Q. Daley  
Dean  
Harvard Medical School

Via e-mail: [office\\_of\\_the\\_dean@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:office_of_the_dean@hms.harvard.edu)

Dear Dean Daley:

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 9 million members and supporters to share information we feel sure you will want to be aware of, given Harvard Medical School's (HMS) reliance on Alpha Genesis, Inc., through the work of Dan Barouch at HMS' Center for Virology and Vaccine Research.

After you review this, we believe you will understand why we are compelled to ask if Barouch, HMS, and HMS's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) have been aware of Alpha Genesis' long history of animal welfare violations, stretching back many years, and if so, why did the IACUC approve experiments conducted at a facility that evidence shows has not prevented escapes, consistently maintained safe conditions, provided adequate veterinary care, or ensured proper containment of zoonotic pathogens?

Information provided to PETA indicates that Barouch regularly travels to South Carolina, where experiments involving monkeys assigned to his studies are conducted at Alpha Genesis. This facility has a long and troubling history of violating the Animal Welfare Act and is now gaining nationwide notoriety for multiple violations of federal law and lack of transparency. The conditions at Alpha Genesis, coupled with the potential for confounding diseases, not only raise grave animal welfare concerns but also call into question the validity and integrity of any research conducted there.

Last week, PETA filed a [formal complaint](#) with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) based on serious allegations brought forward by a veterinary whistleblower. The 270-page report, supported by emails, necropsy records, animal care documentation, and photos, reveals apparently appalling conditions at Alpha Genesis. As a "client," Barouch would have to rely on the staff at Alpha Genesis to conduct his experiments and monitor the animals assigned to his protocols. Among the whistleblower's claims are the following:

- **Lack of adequate facilities, qualified personnel, or proper equipment:** Monkeys were often placed in the wrong cages, and animal care records were frequently filed under incorrect identification numbers. Internal documents show that staff were more concerned about perceived risks of escapes than the health of monkeys on client studies when veterinary care was warranted, writing that transfer to the veterinary clinic "could affect the outcome of the specific research the animal is part of. The possibility

PEOPLE FOR  
THE ETHICAL  
TREATMENT  
OF ANIMALS

Washington  
1536 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-483-PETA

Los Angeles  
2154 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90026  
323-644-PETA

Norfolk  
501 Front St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-622-PETA

Info@peta.org  
PETA.org

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Switzerland
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

of escape increases by moving the animal around campus. These animals are super valuable and we cannot afford to have one escape. I am not saying that if they need emergency treatment they cannot be moved to the clinic. I am referring to minor situations like minor trauma, mild weight loss or diarrhea without major dehydration.”

This lack of attention not only endangers the safety and well-being of the animals but also undermines the integrity of the experiments conducted on them. Additionally, critical equipment—heating pads, fluid bags, and oxygen tanks—was missing from buildings, undermining the ability of staffers to provide care to animals.

- **Disease and Pathogens:** Records show that unintended pathogens including *Shigella* and *Campylobacter* were circulating throughout Alpha Genesis’ colonies. The potential for these and/or unintended/undetected pathogens to infect monkeys assigned to “clients” further undermines the utility of the monkey models used by Barouch.
- **Negligence and Traumatic Injuries:** Between 2021 and 2023, monkeys reportedly suffered severe injuries and were denied essential veterinary care. The documents do not make it clear whether these were monkeys assigned to “clients”; regardless, the frequency of these incidents call into question the policies and procedures of the entire facility. Incidents included:
  - A monkey found dead from hypothermia and dehydration after her head became stuck in a chain-link fence.
  - A monkey who suffocated to death after being trapped under others.
  - An infant monkey who died after becoming caught in a slide bolt lock.
  - Numerous cases of severed tails, fingers, or tongues, likely caused by unsafe housing or failure to secure cages.
- **Failure to Contain Animals:** Forty-three monkeys escaped from Alpha Genesis last month, and additional insider reports allege that at least 20 monkeys died from hyperthermia when a diesel heater malfunctioned. Twelve escapes involving 109 monkeys have been documented in the last decade.

It is deeply troubling that an institution like Harvard Medical School would condone experiments at a facility that has subjected animals to such poor treatment and in conditions that may also compromise the validity of the research, which in turn jeopardizes the grant funding received for these experiments.

We urge you to carefully review this evidence as you consider future collaboration with Alpha Genesis. We look forward to your response and hope HMS will take decisive action to address these serious concerns.

Sincerely,

Kathy Guillermo  
Senior Vice President  
Laboratory Investigations

Cc: Alan Garber, President, Harvard University