

# Fine for Cruelty against OHSU Primate Center called 'too little, too late' by animal wellness groups

*Advocacy leaders appalled by 'wrist-slap,' call for full state criminal investigation*

PORTLAND, OREGON, UNITED STATES, November 7, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Animal Wellness Action](#), [Center for a Humane Economy](#), and Animal Wellness Foundation expressed shock and outrage that a fine against Oregon Health Sciences University was only \$37,900, calling the small sum "too little, too late," given the institution's long and egregious record of mistreatment of research animals in its care

The U.S. Department of Agriculture levied the fine against OHSU for numerous violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act dating back to 2018. The penalty was the result of the USDA's investigation into a series of reported violations by OHSU, all of which ended with animals injured or killed inconsistent with established federal guidelines that govern the treatment of research animals.

Leaders of the animal-welfare groups said the violations were so egregious they should be treated as criminal acts of animal neglect. The leaders called for a separate, state-level criminal investigation of OHSU and its employees responsible for the violations.

In particular, the groups point to a recent incident when a technician failed to remove two monkeys from a cage before placing it in a cleaning apparatus, resulting in the primates being scalded to death.

Other violations include other injuries and deaths of primates resulting from gross negligence, including monkeys being injured and killed when they were trapped or caught in their enclosures and marmosets (a species of small monkey) who had to be euthanized when preventable abscesses in their brains were allowed to develop.



The small fine against OHSU Primate Center for animal-welfare violations has met with scorn from advocates.



The paltry fine issued by USDA...is a gross injustice for the helpless animals who lost their lives due to OHSU's callous disregard for their well-being. "

*Scott Beckstead, director of campaigns*

Multiple species have also been victims of OHSU's systemic failures, including ferrets, gerbils, and voles, some of whom died of starvation or thirst when technicians failed to provide them with minimum care.

OHSU's animal research facilities have racked up far more violations than other regional primate research centers. Oregon law exempts animal research from its cruelty code, but the exemption is not absolute. Where gross negligence is shown, the exemption doesn't apply, and animal

researchers are subject to arrest and prosecution for animal cruelty.

"OHSU's animal research facilities are a black eye for Oregon, a state with a strong history of humane treatment of animals," said Scott Beckstead, director of campaigns for the Center for a Humane Economy and a teacher of animal law at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

"The paltry fine issued by USDA, which will be laughed off by OHSU as a cost of doing business, is a gross injustice for the helpless animals who lost their lives due to OHSU's callous disregard for their well-being. We call on law enforcement agencies, including the Washington County District Attorney, to immediately undertake a criminal investigation and hold these researchers accountable," Beckstead said.

"Not only are these animals neglected and harmed in direct violation of the law and moral decency without consequence, the results from the taxpayer-funded experimentation on non-human primates and other animals are often negligible, with no true benefit to humans," said Tamara Drake, director of research and regulatory policy for the Center for a Humane Economy.

"Many of these experiments continue for decades, without tangible benefit to anyone outside the institution. The financial boon is what drives the experimenters to continue to publish papers to garner continuing government grants and job security," Drake said.

"In what just universe is it possible to get away with such recklessness and disregard for animals that you can essentially boil them alive?" said Marty Irby, executive director for Animal Wellness Action. "It shocks the conscience that such barbarity can be propitiated with a slap on the wrist."

According to Data USA, OHSU's endowment at the end of fiscal year 2020 was worth \$830 million. The institution receives grants and contracts from the federal government, primarily through the National Institute of Health (NIH). [Oregon Health & Science University | Data USA](#)

## ABOUT

Animal Wellness Action is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) whose mission is to help animals by

promoting laws and regulations at federal, state and local levels that forbid cruelty. The group champions causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife, and it advocates against dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty. It also confronts factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, Animal Wellness Action promotes enacting good public policies and monitors the enforcement of those in place. To enact good laws, the group believes citizens must elect good lawmakers, and it helps educate voters on which candidates care about animal issues as well as those who are hostile to them. Animal Wellness Action believes helping animals helps us all.

The Animal Wellness Foundation is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization whose mission is to help animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. The group organizes rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. The Foundation advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. They also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and alleviate suffering. The Animal Wellness Foundation believes helping animals helps us all.

The Center for a Humane Economy is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) whose mission is to help animals by helping forge a more humane economic order. The first organization of its kind in the animal protection movement, the Center encourages businesses to honor their social responsibilities in a culture where consumers, investors, and other key stakeholders abhor cruelty and the degradation of the environment and embrace innovation as a means of eliminating both. The Center believes helping animals helps us all.

Scott Beckstead  
Center for a Humane Economy  
+1 541-530-3460  
[email us here](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/599956802>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.