

2014 RES-275
URGING THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
TO HALT PLANS TO CONDUCT MATERNAL DEPRIVATION STUDIES ON MONKEYS

The University of Wisconsin recently announced that it will resume maternal deprivation experiments on monkeys. The experiments involve separating baby monkeys from their mothers at birth, observing the stress this induces on the baby monkeys, and ultimately killing the monkeys.

The Dane County Board of Supervisors has previously expressed an interest in the University of Wisconsin's experiments on primates. In December 2009, 20 Supervisors signed a letter to the Chancellor expressing concerns. In 2010, Res. 35, 2010-2012, Establishing An Advisory Panel to Study the Ethics of Invasive Research on Non-Human Primates In Dane County, was introduced.

Although Res. 35 was not adopted by the Board of Supervisors, it initiated a dialogue with the University about its experiments on primates. Notwithstanding an intense lobbying effort by University officials, approximately one third of the Board still voted to withdraw the Resolution from committees after it was delayed in committee review. In addition, in response to the Resolution, the University initiated a series of public forums on the topic of the University's experimentation on animals in an attempt to create a substitute for the discussion of the ethics of experimentation on monkeys and other primates that Resolution 35 was intended to create.

Apparently perceiving the "danger" of public scrutiny to have passed, the University of Wisconsin has resumed its most ethically unjustifiable experiments, the maternal deprivation experiments.

During the debate over Resolution 35, University officials argued that experimentation on animals is necessary to attempt to make strides to seek cures to diseases such as cancer and AIDS. The maternal deprivation experiments hold out no hope for a cure for cancer or any other major disease.

The maternal deprivation experiments shock the conscience. By their very design, they maximize the suffering of the animals subjected to the experiments. The experiments are intended to inflict pain and distress on animals with no potential payoff in terms of finding a cure for a disease.

Community standards on certain issues are evolving, and there is increased concern for the well-being of animals. Public norms have evolved on other major issues. Public concerns for animals is growing. The University of Wisconsin has not kept pace with evolving societal norms.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors urges the University of Wisconsin to terminate its plans to resume conducting maternal deprivation studies of monkeys.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors finds that the experiments are morally wrong, as they inflict suffering on monkeys with no expectation of medical gains for humans.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Chancellor of the University, to Dane County's delegation to the Wisconsin Legislature, to Dane County's Representative in the U.S. House of Representatives and Wisconsin's two United States Senators.