

Attention: Scientific Advisory Committee on Alternative Toxicological Methods Meeting

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Private Citizen

Comments: "I am submitting this comment as an individual and on my own behalf. Scientific research that advances human and animal health benefits from integrating cell-based methods, computer modeling and studies in living organisms. Developing methods, such as cell-based assays and computer models, provide new insights and help reduce animal use.

However many important biomedical questions, especially those involving complex biological systems, still require research in animals. In vitro methods, such as those involving organoids, are valuable but they cannot fully represent the interactions and regulation found in whole organisms. Computer models are improving but they are fundamentally limited by data that is not yet collected and can only be collected from studies in animals. They also are limited by the difficulty of simulating the true complexity of life. Major advances in understanding biological processes, and developing and testing the safety and effectiveness of treatments for disease still rely on animal studies for dependable results.

It is important to note the strong ethical standards that guide animal research. Laboratories in the United States must follow USDA regulations with regular inspections and institutional committees ensure humane treatment and encourage alternatives to animal use. These safeguards make sure that animal research is justified and is always conducted with a focus on animal welfare.

In summary new methods are making biomedical research more efficient. Still for many key questions animal research remains essential for safe and effective progress in understanding biology and developing treatments for diseases that affect humans and non-human animals. Keeping a balanced approach with both validated new techniques and careful animal studies is vital for ongoing scientific progress and public benefit."