



American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine

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Mr. Norman Augustine, Chair
Scientific Management Review Board, OD, NIH
Building 1, Room 103
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892
smrb@mail.nih.gov

Dear Mr. Augustine:

I write to you representing 964 veterinary specialists of the American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine (ACLAM). As members of the biomedical research community with a primary mission to support comparative and translation research conducted in animal models, we would like to comment on the November 2010 report by the Translational Medicine and Therapeutics (TMAT) Working group to create a new NIH institute of Translation Medicine and Therapeutics.

While the formation of this Institute or Center is an opportunity to advance translational and therapeutic medicine, there are some critical points that should be highly considered in order to avoid potential risks to our nation's biomedical research infrastructure.

The Division of Comparative Medicine within the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) has been key to advancing the United States' biomedical research mission. Support from this division has not only helped train critically needed professionals, such as veterinarians and veterinary scientists, to meet the demands of translation research, but also allowed support for key biomedical resources such as the Knockout Mouse Project, the Mutant Mouse Resource Centers, the Drosophila Stock Center, the Zebrafish Resource Center and the eight National Primate Research Centers. This support has provided key resources, efficiently and cost effectively, to facilitate our nation's biomedical research.

We appeal to the Scientific Management Review Board give strong consideration to and seek expert input from the many comparative medicine veterinary scientists and specialists to maintain the important mission of NCRR's Division of Comparative Medicine either independently, as it currently is placed within NCRR, or through intact transfer to the proposed Center for Translational Medicine and Therapeutics. Please let me know how our College can be of further assistance in future discussions on this subject.

Sincerely,

Ravi Tolwani, D.V.M., Ph.D.
President, American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine

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