



Robert J. Jones
President
University of Washington
president@uw.edu

cc: regents@uw.edu

January 8, 2026

Dear President Jones,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Northwest Animal Rights Network and the additional undersigned organizations. Our members and supporters include many students and alumni of the University of Washington (UW), as well as others from our community who have a relationship with the school.

We write to ask you to live up to the UW's mission to advance knowledge and engage in cutting-edge research by leading the university in a decision to not submit an application for a Primate Research Center Grant (P51) in 2026. Instead, lead the university to close the Washington National Primate Research Center (WaNPRC) and retire the primates. The WaNPRC has spent years racking up violations of the Animal Welfare Act, having a director with a disregard for animal welfare, and becoming a reputational and financial liability to the UW.

The WaNPRC is one of seven remaining NPRCs because Harvard, a top research university, closed the New England Primate Research Center in 2015 following repeated federal animal welfare violations and financial concerns. The same writing is on the wall for the UW.

Just since 2020, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the USDA has cited the UW for the following violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act and its associated Animal Welfare Regulations:

- [2025-07-08](#)
 - During an intracranial injection surgery on a monkey, the software in a robotic arm malfunctioned and made uncontrolled movements. The monkey suffered a seizure during recovery and did not have full use of the left side of their body for a few weeks. Three weeks after the botched surgery, experimenters performed a second surgery. The monkey did not recover from anesthesia and was euthanized. The necropsy report showed a blood clot at the monkey's brain stem and hemorrhage at the base of the brain.

- Despite concerns from an attending veterinarian, the IACUC approved the shipment of an elderly monkey across the country without following established procedures. The monkey died.
- Experimenters gave the wrong strain of a virus to ten monkeys over the course of two years, which they realized when one of the monkeys reached the point of being euthanized at three days instead of the planned five days after administration and they tested the strain type.
- Experimenters subjected six monkeys to more imaging procedures than were approved in a protocol and used four more monkeys in an experiment than were approved in the protocol. Additionally, twelve monkeys were subjected to imaging in an experiment for which imaging was not approved.
- Experimenters gave a monkey a higher dose of medication than was approved; the monkey was later euthanized after experiencing expected complications in the experiment.
- Three rooms with cages of monkeys had chipping paint directly above the cages, creating issues with sanitization and possible injury, and toxic chemicals were stored on the counter used for food preparation for monkeys.
- [2025-06-12](#)
 - A cage holding ten monkeys had an exposed rusted panel, and most of the cages in an indoor facility had at least one sliding pulley system door with moderate damage. This disrepair creates a risk of injury for the monkeys and makes cage cleaning and sanitization difficult.
- [2024-10-08](#)
 - Experimenters subjected a monkey to an x-ray procedure to observe swallowing more times than approved in the protocol (three times a week for four weeks), and the monkey experienced radiation toxicity with symptoms.
 - Experimenters performed lymph node biopsies on the same four monkeys without providing them with the required pain reliever on two different dates.
 - Experimenters performed a spinal tap on a monkey without providing them with the required pain reliever.
 - Two monkeys escaped their cages, leading to four monkeys sustaining injuries; three of them had to be sedated for wound treatment.
 - Three rooms with cages of twenty monkeys had lights on continuously for nine days, not allowing the monkeys any time away from constant light.
- [2023-09-12](#)
 - A supervisor stepped away while a new trainee was performing a procedure to place a recording device on a monkey's brain. The trainee damaged brain tissue, and the monkey exhibited neurological impairment within minutes.
 - Experimenters used an anesthesia machine that did not work correctly with the circuit attached to it, which caused the machine to malfunction and quickly develop pressure in the tubing. The machine was used for a monkey who was experiencing complications during anesthesia, and the machine killed the

monkey with the rapid pressure into the lungs. Barotrauma was the cause of death.

- Experimenters performed a second surgery on a monkey when only one surgery had been approved on the protocol.
- No one gave a monkey his daily ration of water during an experiment that used water regulation as part of manipulating monkeys to perform behavioral tasks.
- [2023-03-21](#)
 - At five different times during July, for periods of four to over nine hours, the temperature in a room holding seven monkeys was over 85 degrees Fahrenheit.
- [2021-08-12](#)
 - On three different days in July, a primate room with 14 – 15 monkeys reached temperatures over 85 degrees Fahrenheit for periods of four to seven hours.
 - In a building holding 226 monkeys, the ceiling light coverings for every primate enclosure contained a significant amount of rodent feces, and many places on the floor also had rodent feces.
- [2021-01-26](#)
 - Staff left a monkey in a trapping run for over twelve hours without access to food or water.
 - Two monkeys escaped a cage when one of them broke the locks. Seven monkeys sustained injuries.
- [2020-12-01](#)
 - A one-year-old monkey escaped her cage through a feeder opening that staff had neglected to lock. She climbed onto another cage, and the monkey in it pulled her arm through the 1×1 inch mesh enclosure. She sustained multiple injuries and had to have her arm amputated.

The UW has proven itself incapable of acting in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act in its use of primates in research and breeding, and a P51 grant will do nothing to ensure compliance. In FY2025 alone, the UW received a total of over \$513 million in taxpayer dollars from the NIH, but that didn't prevent violations of protocols and procedures, facilities from being in disrepair, and deadly mistakes in experiments that caused the suffering and death of primates.

These violations of the Animal Welfare Act also show noncompliance with the Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Animals and the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* under the federal Health Research Extension Act of 1985. All institutions that receive funding from the NIH for experiments on vertebrate animals are supposed to be in compliance.

Furthermore, the UW has shown that it will install leadership with a disregard for animal welfare at the WaNPRC. The former WaNPRC Director Michele Basso had a known history of disregard for animal welfare practices when the UW hired her, yet it still placed her in a critical leadership position. History repeated itself. Basso was removed from the director position in

2024, and this year all her experiments on animals were suspended due to her non-compliance and disregard for animal welfare standards.

It is well past time for the UW to end this entwinement with federal violations and disregard for animal welfare, as well as to free itself from the damage that it does to the UW's reputation and finances. It is time for the UW to make the bold decision to not submit the P51 grant application, close the WaNPRC, retire the primates, and take hold of the narrative that the UW is moving into a future of non-animal, human-relevant research that is effective and cutting-edge. **For Animals. For Innovation. Be Boundless.**

Sincerely,

Amanda L. Elyse

Amanda L. Elyse, JD, MS
Policy and Programs Lead
Northwest Animal Rights Network
amanda.elyse@narn.org

Diana Goodrich
Co-Director
Chimpanzee Sanctuary Northwest

Meredith Blanchard
Director, Advocacy and Policy
National Anti-Vivisection Society

Janine McCarthy, MPH
Acting Director of Research Policy
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine