



The American Neurological Association

May 31, 1996

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Dear Colleagues:

The animal rights community has designated June 18-24, 1996 "World Animal Awareness Week." Organizers are anticipating a "six figure crowd" of participants to converge on Capitol Hill, June 24.

The entire biomedical research community must take advantage of the media and other attention that will be created during this week to deliver a clear message about the benefits and importance of biomedical research, as well as the indispensable part animals play in critical projects.

Enclosed is a draft letter which the National Association for Brain Research urges you to send to your U.S. Representatives urging them NOT to co-sponsor H.R. 3393 "The Family Pet Protection Act of 1996" or the "Pet Safety and Protection Act of 1996". These bills do not protect pets, but would severely impede research.

These bills ban research facilities from obtaining dogs or cats from dealers who do not breed and raise the animals themselves; make it more difficult for research facilities to obtain unwanted municipal pound animals that would likely be killed; disallow private animal shelters from voluntarily choosing to make animals available for research; and limits individuals from donating cats or dogs to research facilities to giving only those animals they bred and raised as well as owned for not less than 1 year before donation.

For your convenience, the draft letter may be sent to you via e-mail by contacting Linda Wilkerson at 103053.222@compuserve.com.

Sincerely,

John N. Whitaker, M.D.
President

JNW:ljw
Enclosure

**121st ANNUAL MEETING—October 13-16, 1996
THE DORAL GOLF RESORT AND SPA, MIAMI, FL**



SAMPLE LETTER FOR H.R. 3398 AND H.R. 3393

The Honorable (Use NABR Congressional Directory)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative _____:

I am writing to urge you NOT to cosponsor H.R. 3393, the "Family Pet Protection Act of 1996", and H.R. 3398, the "Pet Safety and Protection Act of 1996", introduced by Representatives Jon Fox (R-PA) and Charles Canady (R-FL), respectively. *Please do not be swayed by the innocuous titles of these bills; neither measure protects pets from theft.* Instead, H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398 play on every family's real fear of losing the pet. Both bills would hinder research by eliminating a vital source of dogs and cats used in lifesaving medical research such as cardiovascular, neurological, and orthopedic disorders and diseases.

H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398 are based upon the false and undocumented premise that one million dogs and cats are being stolen from homes across the nation and sold to research facilities. According to the USDA's documented figures for FY 1994, an approximate total of 100,000 dogs and 30,000 cats were used for research and education. About 50% of these animals were purposely bred for research. Research facilities acquire the other 50,000 from USDA-licensed animal dealers (Class B dealers) who obtain animals from pounds or other individuals. Depending on state or local law, researchers may also acquire abandoned pound animals.

Researchers do not want or need to use pets. The research community wants the public to be confident that research animals are not pets and strives to assure the public of this fact. Researchers, however, now find themselves in an impossible situation of proving that none of the 50,000 random-source dogs used for research are stolen or lost pets. The chance pets will be found in a laboratory is extremely remote. It is a thousand times more likely animals will end up at the pound, where 10-16 million animals are killed annually because they are not claimed or adopted.

Under H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398, the 50,000 random-source animals would be illegal, if not impossible, to obtain. H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398 would put all Class B dealers doing business with research institutions out of business. The bills would prevent research facilities from obtaining pound animals by imposing impossible restrictions on the pounds. Additionally, only pounds making animals available to research would be required to register with USDA and subject to federally mandated holding periods. H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398 would disallow private shelters from making animals available to research.

I hope that you will oppose H.R. 3393 and H.R. 3398. The bills do not protect pets, but would severely impede research. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact me at _____ or the National Association for Biomedical Research at (202) 857-0540. Thank you for your consideration.

cc: Rep. Fox
Rep. Canady
NABR Office