



April 7, 2020

The Honorable Dana Nessel
Attorney General of Michigan
P.O. Box 30212
525 W. Ottawa St.
Lansing, MI 48909-0212
miag@michigan.gov

Kym L. Worthy
Wayne County Prosecutor
1200 Frank Murphy Hall of Justice
1441 St. Antoine St.
Detroit, MI 48226-2302
prosecutor@waynecounty.com

RE: Ongoing Violations of Executive Order 2020-21 by Wayne State University

Dear Attorney General Nessel and Prosecutor Worthy:

On behalf of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine and Michigan-based Attorneys for Animals, we are writing to request that you launch an immediate investigation into ongoing violations of Gov. Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-21 by Wayne State University.¹ We are filing this complaint with both of your offices because of the urgency of this matter, and we believe whichever office can act faster should do so.

Since 1991, Wayne State has used dogs in invasive, fatal experiments in which medical devices are implanted in the animals' hearts and around major blood vessels during multiple surgeries and cables and wires are surgically tunneled out their backs.² Then the dogs are forced to run on treadmills while heart failure and/or hypertension are induced.³ Even when they are not running on treadmills, the dogs often have their hearts artificially "paced" at more than twice the upper normal rate.⁴

On March 30, the Physicians Committee wrote to M. Roy Wilson, MD, President of Wayne State, to ask that he immediately release any dogs assigned to these experiments and end the experiments entirely. On April 2, Dr. Wilson responded:

Specifically, there are five dogs on site. Two of the dogs are naïve (not instrumented), and arrangements are being made to have them adopted into a good home. Critical infrastructure workers are on site daily to care for the other three, and they are completing their studies.

¹ Mich. Exec. Order No. 2020-21 (Mar. 24, 2020), https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90705-522626--,00.html.

² Wayne State University animal use protocols "Blood Pressure Control During Exercise in Heart Failure" and "Mechanisms Mediating Enhanced Sympatho-Activation During Exercise in Hypertension," obtained via Michigan Freedom of Information Act.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

By using critical infrastructure workers to ensure that dogs “are completing their studies,” Wayne State violates Gov. Whitmer’s order, which was designed to “prohibit in-person work that is not necessary to sustain or protect life.”⁵ The dog experiments conducted at Wayne State do not constitute activities “necessary to sustain or protect life.” To the contrary, for almost three decades the experiments have failed to translate to improvements in the treatment of cardiovascular disease in human patients while costing taxpayers more than \$11.6 million and killing hundreds of dogs.

While Wayne State may allow critical infrastructure staff to “care for animals,” forcing dogs to undergo intensive experiments does not fall under any of the exceptions outlined in Executive Order 2020-21.⁶ Every dog who survives the experiments’ initial surgeries will eventually die during the experiments. Ensuring this outcome appears to be the intent of Wayne State, which is continuing to collect data even though those data have proven fruitless for nearly three decades and even though the Executive Order prohibits doing so. By protocol, these experiments use each dog for as long as they can physically withstand the grueling rigors of the study. There is no telling how long the three remaining dogs will live, and thus there is no telling how long Wayne State will continue to violate the Executive Order.

Wayne State’s zealous commitment to historically unproductive and demonstrably cruel experiments on dogs is now putting its critical infrastructure workers at great risk, in violation of the Executive Order. Even in the face of a global public health crisis the university insists on subjecting dogs—and now these workers too—to pain and distress. It is clear that nothing short of decisive action from one of your offices will stop this.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



John J. Pippin, MD, FACC
Director of Academic Affairs
Physicians Committee for Responsible
Medicine
Phone: 972-407-9396
Email: jpippin@pcrm.org



Beatrice Friedlander, JD
President, Board of Directors
Attorneys for Animals

⁵ Mich. Exec. Order No. 2020-21 (Mar. 24, 2020), https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90705-522626--,00.html.

⁶ Ibid.