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Bipartisan Bill to End Animal Testing on Cosmetics Introduced in Congress

AAVS Applauds Emphasis on Alternatives Now and into the Future

November 20, 2019

Jenkintown—The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) welcomes the introduction of the Humane Cosmetics Act of 2019 to both chambers of Congress and applauds the bill's emphasis on the development and use of non-animal alternatives to test cosmetic products. Introduced on November 18 with bipartisan sponsorship, this year's Humane Cosmetics Act is more detailed and comprehensive in its approach to end the use of animals to test cosmetic products than previous versions.

"We are confident that this bill presents the most decisive way to get past the bottleneck of recent years that has held up progress. It is constructive that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) would be required to develop a strategic plan to promote the development of non-animal methods of testing, as well as to facilitate the validation of new alternatives," said Sue Leary, President of AAVS and its affiliate, the Alternatives Research & Development Foundation.

"Previous iterations of the Humane Cosmetics Act were not as precise in terms of promoting alternatives and incorporating their use into future regulations. We see this bill as the best path forward."

Further driving the importance and reliability of alternatives, the Humane Cosmetics Act requires companies to assure the safety of cosmetic products and ingredients by relying on data produced only through non-animal methods.

In its capacity as Chair of the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics (CCIC), AAVS manages the Leaping Bunny Program in the U.S. and Canada, and in the process, has certified

over 1700 companies as 'cruelty-free.' "Our experience with companies, large and small, shows that safe, high quality cosmetic and personal care products absolutely can be made without animal testing, and that consumers are demanding those products," added AAVS's Leaping Bunny Program Manager, Kim Paschen.

IMPORTANT POINTS IN THE BILL:

- Prohibits testing cosmetics and their ingredients on animals, as well as the sale and transport of animal-tested cosmetics.
- Applies to all vertebrate animals, including mice, rats, and fish, who are not covered by the Animal Welfare Act.
- Penalty can be up to \$10,000 per violation, per animal, per day.
- Consistent with EU policy, exemption given when animal testing is required by another country, such as China, if no alternative is available, or if a safety concern arises.
- Creates a unified cruelty-free criteria that cannot be superseded by individual state laws.
- Labeling must meet defined cruelty-free criteria and if there's an exception, notice must be publicly available.
- If the FDA wants to use animals to test a substance, the public must be given 60 days to comment on the proposed testing.
- FDA is directed to create a strategic plan to promote the development and use of alternatives and strategies to replace animal tests with alternatives. The public must be given 60 days to comment on the plan.

This latest version of the Humane Cosmetics Act has many important elements, like alternatives and the inclusion of all vertebrate animals, such as mice, rats, and fish, who are used, along with rabbits and guinea pigs, in large numbers for testing," said Crystal Schaeffer, AAVS Outreach Director. "It's also important that the public will be given the opportunity to comment on FDA's plan to replace animal tests with alternatives in safety regulations, as well as any agency decision requiring animal testing for a product. AAVS members and supporters have spoken out repeatedly against animal suffering, and we recognize that this new bill represents a great opportunity to turn the corner on animal testing for cosmetics."

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