



Stop Animal Exploitation Now!
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Robert W. Rubin, CEO
Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute
2425 Ridgecrest Dr. SE
Albuquerque, NM 87108-5127

1/25/12

Mr. Rubin,

I am writing to you today to discuss some issues regarding the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute (LRRI) in the past relative to animal issues. A previous statement by LRRI contains the text: "a former employee terminated for cause has apparently spread false and exaggerated statements claiming mass killing of dogs and monkeys." Firstly, sir, nowhere in the information which we released was it mentioned that we were dealing with a previous employee. In fact, I have personally had conversations with several LRRI staff, both past and present.

Secondly, this statement attempts to obfuscate the facts. The information provided to SAEN discussed the killing of 300 monkeys and a significant number of dogs. Initially, there was no way to document this situation. However, the attached USDA inspection reports now confirm the deaths of these animals. As you can see from the attached USDA inspection reports for 3/3/11 and 9/14/11 the inventory of non-human primates and dogs changed drastically during this period.

To be exact, on 3/3/11 the primate inventory for LRRI was 951 and the dog inventory was 293. However, by 9/14/11 the primate inventory had plummeted to 646 while the dog inventory had declined to 183. During this time period the primate inventory at LRRI dropped by 305 and the dog inventory declined by 110. Therefore, these federal reports clearly confirm that during this time period the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute took the lives of hundreds of animals, which is exactly what we were told by the whistleblower.

In July of 2011, the time period during which we were told this process was underway, I personally attempted to contact you to discuss this situation. Despite repeated efforts to contact you both by email and by telephone, you refused to reply. SAEN has been involved in the placement of primates into sanctuaries in the past, and we are connected to many organizations that could have helped to place the dogs in homes as well.

Your refusal to even reply to attempts at communication indicate that you apparently think that you are immune to public pressure, and that no one has any justification for outrage at the actions of LRRI. This is clearly untrue. The unnecessary deaths of these animals is clearly a reason for public outrage.

As you know, LRRI was fined \$21,750 (a comparatively large penalty) by the USDA for multiple violations of the Animal Welfare Act including one incident which directly took the live of a non-human primate. As you also know, since the citations which were the basis of this fine occurred, LRRI has continued to violate the Animal Welfare Act, being cited for the deaths of several more animals by exsanguination and suffocation.

As you know, LRRI is under investigation by the IES division of the USDA regarding these violations, and I trust that additional enforcement actions will be forthcoming. And as you likely already know, whistleblowers have also provided additional information to the USDA which will form the basis of even more investigations, which will no doubt lead to yet another set of fines.

Rest assured that the USDA will be spending a substantial amount of time within your facility, and all violations will be discovered. And as the newer violations become apparent, SAEN will publicize each and every one of them so that the people of New Mexico, and the U.S. will learn the truth about all criminal activity within LRRI.

However, I believe that it is possible to resolve some of the questions and concerns regarding the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute. Therefore, I officially request that you take two actions as a sign of good faith in attempting to resolve the controversy regarding Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute.

First, I officially request the opportunity to tour the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, with representatives of all local news media (television, radio, print) so that the current condition of all animals within LRRI may be ascertained. This tour will necessarily include the opportunity to visually examine all animals currently held at LRRI. As a graduate Animal Health Technician, I am familiar with all relevant procedures for sterility, etc. and will be happy to abide by your procedures.

Second, since many animals die annually within LRRI, I believe that it would also be necessary to examine the post mortem records for all dogs and primates (as a beginning) that have died within the last year. Once the examination of these records is completed, I also believe that it will be necessary to examine similar records for all rabbits, guinea pigs, and ferrets as well. It is especially crucial and urgent to immediately examine the records for the primates and dogs who died during the period 3/31/11 – 9/14/11 to initially ascertain that all proper procedures were utilized regarding the deaths of the 305 monkeys and 110 dogs who died during this period.

Your response to this information request and request for tours of your facility for both myself and local news media will make your position clear. If you believe that LRRI has nothing to hide, then you will allow this tour and provide access to the records as requested above.

If, on the other hand, LRRI is attempting to conceal evidence of criminal behavior, then you will withhold these documents and deny my request for a tour. There can be no other legitimate motivation for maintaining secrecy. I do not constitute any threat to LRRI, and it is very easy for your organization to segregate any potentially commercially valuable material. Remember, I have NOT asked to see any research protocols or procedural records. I have asked only for the post-mortem records for the animals who have died within the last year.

So, you are left with a choice. On one hand you can provide public access to your facilities and a very small number of records, thereby providing the information relevant to the care of animals within LRRI and potentially putting this controversy to rest, or you can withhold this information, which will serve only to confirm the fact that LRRI has something to hide, and that criminal behavior is still underway at the facility.

I will expect your response within five business days.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Budkie, A.H.T.,
Executive Director, SAEN

Attachments: Animal Inventory Comparison
CC: Jackie Lovelace Johnson
Chair, Board of Directors