

November 13, 2001

Dr. Bill Stokes

Director

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Re: Federal Register Notice, September 28, 2001 – Submitted Electronically

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on behalf of the Doris Day Animal League's 300,000 members and supporters on the *Guidance Document on Using In Vitro Data to Estimate In Vivo Starting Doses for Acute Toxicity*. Certainly, the workshop convened by NIEHS provided a forum for discussion and subsequent publication of recommendations that provide a starting point for additional work to be prioritized. We appreciate the efforts of the NIEHS on this issue of importance to so many animal protection advocates and urge the agency to provide the necessary leadership to eliminate the use of animals in acute systemic toxicity testing.

The significant observations made by a number of experts in the field of cytotoxicity featured in the final report provide a basis for the following recommendations: 1) a working group of scientific experts should be convened as soon as possible to "identify and/or define specific *in vitro* cytotoxicity test protocols for inclusion in a prevalidation study of their use for predicting LD50 values" (p.xxiii); 2) a strong emphasis must be placed on utilizing human cell lines to generate data with the most relevant and predictive value for humans; and 3) the goal must be an *in vitro* replacement battery.

As mandated in the October 14, 1999 agreement, we strongly urge the NIEHS and the EPA to direct resources toward fulfilling the goal of replacing the animal-based acute toxicity test methods, including the refinement methods, with an *in vitro* test battery. While the workshop and its report provide a starting point for furthering this goal, it is imperative that additional resources be directed toward fulfilling the replacement goal in an expeditious manner.

In the meantime, the Doris Day Animal League will be encouraging the EPA to prioritize incorporating the recommendations in the workshop report as a first step in addressing the goal of replacing the use of animals in acute toxicity testing for the HPV program.

Over the past seven decades, millions of animals have been used in LD/50 testing, which is purely a crude measurement of lethality. The federal government, led by NIEHS and the EPA, should ensure that sound science prevails through the development and validation of an *in vitro* battery to replace lethal dose tests.

Sincerely,

Sara J. Amundson

Deputy Director, Doris Day Animal League