

March 21, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Community Review Board and the OHA:

Thank you for your work on behalf of the citizens of Oregon. You have heard that thousands of Oregonians would like to see the millions of dollars currently used to maintain a huge monkey facility be used instead to improve patient care. So, you may be wondering what authority—or obligations—you may have to act on this issue, and how can we get it done in an orderly way. Allow me to connect the dots, if I may.

First, regarding authority: The Community Review Board's role, by law, is to represent the community's concerns. They may be similar to or different from your own, of course, but conveying them faithfully is nonetheless your core mission. As discussed in the first CRB meeting, you also have the authority to recommend approval of the merger *with conditions*. More on this below.

Second, in examining the live and written public comments, the single greatest community concern is the use (or misuse) of funds for primate experiments while medical care is suffering. More than 5,000 individuals have registered their opinions with you, asking that the primate center be closed as part of the merger conditions, with essentially no dissenting voices. The revelations of animal mistreatment have offended many Oregonians, as you have heard, and it is the financial drag that has risen to the forefront.

Here are some helpful economic details:

- a. **Assets.** The Oregon National Primate Research Center (ONPRC) occupies Beaverton real estate worth approximately \$230 million, including land and structures. Repurposing or sale of these assets will release substantial resources that can be used for patient care and other programs.
- b. **Eliminating Maintenance costs.** The costs of housing 5,000 monkeys and maintaining the center's personnel and equipment total roughly \$60 million annually. However, support for this expense is about to be cut. In 2025, the federal government announced cuts for payments for what are called "indirect costs." While these payments can add 50% to 75% to research income, they will likely be cut to around 15%, posing a huge liability, described by [the Oregonian](#) on February 10, 2025, in an article, entitled *OHSU, Oregon Research Institutions Stand to Lose Millions in Proposed NIH Funding Cuts*:

"...the change would deal a major blow to OHSU, Oregon's largest recipient of NIH funding. OHSU received \$277 million from the NIH in fiscal year 2024, according to federal data, \$73.6 million of it for indirect costs."

Third, it turns out that OHSU has been less than truthful about its research program. Rather than faithfully adhering "to all state and federal policies and guidelines concerning research with animals," as it asserted in its March 7, 2025, [post](#), OHSU has had major animal-welfare violations and paid large fines to settle them. It also failed to disclose that huge resources have gone into shocking experiments involving giving drugs and

alcohol to monkeys, experiments involving forced sexual behavior, and others that have destroyed public confidence.

More than 5,000 Oregonians have asked that the facility's assets be repurposed to something of which we can be proud and that will advance patient care.

in 2015, Harvard closed its New England Primate Research Center. The process took just 24 months and allowed Harvard to focus on what it does best. Harvard worked with NIH to renegotiate its obligations, trained staff for other positions, and transferred the primates to sanctuaries, zoos, or other facilities.

**Recommendation.** The CRB can recommend that the merger between OHSU and Legacy Health be *approved with conditions*. This course of action would represent the public's opinion and will allow important steps to begin. As Harvard did, OHSU can notify the National Institutes of Health that it elects to wind down its obligations over a transitional period and relocate its surviving primates, eliminating a huge financial obligation.

The land occupied by the center can then be sold or developed for other purposes, and the fixed costs of running the center and maintaining the animals will be eliminated. As donor trust is restored, donations and bequests will be more secure. OHSU's future will be significantly brighter and patient care will be something of which all can be proud.

Thank you for your review. If further details would be helpful, I would be pleased to provide them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neal D. Barnard MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Neal D. Barnard, MD  
President