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To whom it may concern at HCMO:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Oregon National Primate Research Center (ONPRC) and urge you to reject misinformation that threatens this critical research institution.

Recently, false claims by groups like the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) have distorted the reality of ONPRC's work and its commitment to both scientific progress and animal welfare. These attacks not only misrepresent the facts but also endanger the future of medical innovation, public health, and compassionate animal care.

A quick Google search will tell you that the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine group is nothing but the medical arm for the PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) animal rights group notorious for its controversies and misleading, downright harmful, campaigns against institutions that actually protect animal welfare. It is appalling that threats made by these groups are being used against the hospital to prevent the OHSU-Legacy merger. It is clear these groups do not care about the welfare of our animals.

To set the record straight, ONPRC does NOT mistreat their animals. ONPRC upholds the highest animal welfare standards, exceeding the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act and USDA oversight. Animal research is often misunderstood, but the reality is simple: this work is a mission of love—for people and animals alike.

Researchers, veterinarians, and animal care teams dedicate their lives to advancing medicine, ensuring the highest ethical standards, and protecting both human and animal health. Veterinary technicians and animal care teams form deep bonds with the animals they work with, providing them with enrichment, comfort, and the best possible care. Veterinarians and animal care professionals at ONPRC provide around-the-clock care, enrichment, and medical attention, ensuring that all animals receive humane and ethical treatment.

I have yet to meet a vet, vet tech, or animal care team who doesn't love animals. Vets have told me personally that prefer working in animal research to private practice because animals in research are so much better take care of than many, many pets.

Regardless of PCRM's claims, primate research is NOT outdated and is still very much necessary. While there are alternative models, no technology fully replicates the complexity of a living system. Primate research remains critical for studying conditions such as Alzheimer's,

Parkinson's, infectious diseases, and reproductive health—areas where animal-free methods cannot yet provide complete answers. The public demands new medicines, vaccines, and therapies but those advancements do not happen without ethical research, including necessary animal studies. We live in a world of scientific reality, where new treatments and cures require rigorous study before they are safe for people or animals.

The worst claim, in my opinion, is that ONPRC research is wasteful and doesn't benefit human health. Nothing could be further from the truth. ONPRC has contributed to breakthrough medical discoveries that have improved and saved millions of lives.

For example:

- Vaccines & Infectious Disease Research – ONPRC studies were key to the development of COVID-19, Zika, and HIV treatments.
- Neurological Disorders – ONPRC research has advanced treatments for multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's disease.
- Cancer Therapies – Studies at ONPRC have led to new cancer drugs and improved radiation therapies.

ONPRC is not just an Oregon institution—it is a national leader in biomedical research, driving medical innovation across the country. Restricting or closing ONPRC would mean a loss of life-saving research that directly impacts millions of patients, a blow to Oregon's economy (ONPRC supports thousands of jobs and generates millions in federal research funding), and a shift of research to countries with weaker animal welfare regulations rather than maintaining strong ethical oversight in the U.S.

PCRM may think they are protecting the animals we have at ONPRC but they are actually creating more harm than they can even begin to comprehend. The ones truly protecting the animals at ONPRC are the staff at ONPRC. Following PCRM and its followers' wishes would mean destruction of our animal colonies, loss of jobs for hundreds of incredibly dedicated and passionate TRUE animal carers, and ending hundreds of critical research projects that would be a devastating blow to biomedical research.

I have worked in pediatric pathology for most of my career working with the most vulnerable of our population – our children. I have collaborated with medical teams across all specialties including surgery, oncology, and palliative care. I have seen firsthand the benefits of biomedical research and how it has saved lives. I worked with doctors whose research projects were through animal models and then went on to creating lifesaving medical interventions.

When I moved to Oregon, I decided to take a temp job at the ONPRC to make some money before applying to graduate school. I ended up forgoing my plans of graduate school to stay at

ONPRC. I have never worked on a campus with a more dedicated and compassionate group of people. From the veterinary staff to the technicians to the researchers and facility staff – I was completely shocked at the level of love and care these people had for the animals. I am infuriated by these animal rights activists who claim they love animals and continue to be misinformed and spread harmful propaganda about my colleagues. I am sickened that they use ONPRC's legally required transparency per FOIA to twist the narrative in their favor.

I urge you to stand with science, ethics, and progress. ONPRC and the staff, researchers, and animal colony do not deserve to be used as leverage in the OHSU-Legacy merger negotiations. No one will benefit from the closure of ONPRC. I appreciate your commitment to facts, animal welfare, and biomedical research.

Thank you,

Chae Kim

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