

November 12, 2001

Dr. William Stokes, Director
NICEATM (MD EC-17), NIEHS
P.O. Box 12233
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Dear Dr. William Stokes, Director,

I understand that after years of protest from compassionate individuals, the LD50 Test (in which animals are force fed or exposed to chemicals to estimate the dose needed to kill 50% of them) is slowly being phased out internationally and is being replaced with tests that use fewer animals [or none at all]. A recent workshop held by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), a government agency that researches the health effects of environmental hazards, addressed the feasibility of going one step further and replacing the animal tests completely with in-vitro cell culture tests. Scientists at the NIEHS workshop have agreed to a partial implementation of in vitro testing, to set a "starting dose" for the lethal poisoning tests, which would have the effect of further reducing the number of animals in the tests.

I applaud the NIEHS for inviting the public to comment on the findings of these scientists and for recommending the use of in-vitro cell cultures as a replacement for lethal animal tests. Let us discard the barbaric science of the past and move into the new realm of efficient, cruelty-free science.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mandy Weeks