



5215 Old Orchard Rd, Suite 270  
Skokie, IL 60077 USA  
Tel: +1-224-592-5700  
Fax: +1-224-365-0004  
isscr@isscr.org  
www.isscr.org

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October 12, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Submission in *NABR V. United Airlines et al.* Docket No. DOT-OST-2018-0124

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR), I write to express our support for the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR)'s complaint requesting relief from discriminatory airline carriage policies that impede the transportation of animals for biomedical research.

The ISSCR is the leading professional organization of stem cell scientists and represents more than 4,000 members in the United States and around the world. Our members are scientists, clinicians, business leaders, ethicists and educators dedicated to the responsible advancement of stem cell research and its translation to the clinic. We support humane and responsible animal research to improve our understanding of human disease and to develop new therapies. Animal research has been necessary for the development of nearly every new Food and Drug Administration-approved therapy. The discriminatory airline carriage policies that impede the transportation of animals for biomedical research will thus undermine the development of new therapies for human diseases.

What interest can airlines have in impeding biomedical research that is more important than the development of new therapies for suffering patients? Scientific research is a collaborative enterprise and often requires the sharing of unique resources, including animal models, with scientists across state and national borders. Animals used in research are often carefully bred or maintained for specific genetic traits, and they are important to scientists in other locations who can provide unique expertise or facilities that allow them to gain new insights into the biological basis of disease, or to test new therapies. The airlines' discriminatory and detrimental policies will increase the cost of biomedical research and slow the pace of discovery.

We urge the Department of Transportation (DOT) to investigate the complaint filed by the NABR, and to require all airlines to eliminate carriage policies that discriminate against the transportation of animals necessary for biomedical research. We respectfully request that DOT take these actions to ensure the continued progress of biomedical research.

Thank you for your consideration. If the ISSCR can clarify any of these views or be of assistance, please contact Eric Anthony, ISSCR's Director of Policy at [eanthony@isscr.org](mailto:eanthony@isscr.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Melton".

Douglas A. Melton, PhD  
President, ISSCR  
Xander University Professor, Harvard University  
Co-Director, Harvard Stem Cell Institute