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Steve Juarez, Associate Vice President and Director

February 25, 2015

The Honorable Jose Medina
Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 147 (Dababneh), as introduced January 15, 2015
Scheduled to be heard by the Assembly Higher Education Committee on March 3, 2015
Position: OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Member Medina:

The University of California (UC) is committed to the responsible and humane care of our research animals. Research involving animals at UC is closely monitored and subject to a number of federal laws and guidelines, and this work is regulated by the U.S. Public Health Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). All UC campuses follow University policies regarding the use of animals in research, including the "[Systemwide Guidance on Adoption of Research Dogs and Cats](#)." These guidelines state that dogs and cats used for research or teaching may be adopted as companion animals provided that they are in good health, have an expectation for a normal quality of life, and have suitable temperaments.

All UC campuses that perform teaching, testing or research on cats and dogs encourage adoption whenever possible. Although animals used for teaching, testing and research can sometimes be pets of faculty and students, for animals that do not already have owners, some UC campuses have established a "direct adoption" approach where, instead of utilizing third party adoption agencies or shelters, the campus manages the adoption process directly. These direct adoption programs ensure that all animals suitable for adoption find safe and happy homes, whether they are with students, staff or members of the public.

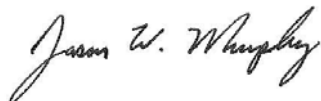
Unfortunately, AB 147 could bar this highly successful direct adoption practice. The University is concerned that AB 147's directive to "offer the dogs or cats to an animal adoption organization or animal rescue organization for adoption" would eliminate the direct adoption programs run by UC campuses by mandating that campuses turn over animals to local shelters and outside organizations, where the opportunity for a successful adoption is less likely.

AB 147's broad language may also undermine the authority of our campus attending veterinarians and campus Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUC) to assess the suitability of animals for placement outside the University. These complex determinations are best made on a case-by-case basis through the expert scientific judgment of our campus researchers and veterinarians. By failing to allow the individuals who are most familiar with the animals to determine the most appropriate course of action, this measure potentially jeopardizes both the long-term wellbeing of the animals and the individuals who may adopt them. UC is also concerned that AB 147 could create a new legal cause of action against scientists, veterinarians and UC if determinations of adoptability were later disputed.

UC remains committed to solutions for adoptable research animals that offer the best opportunity for placement in stable and loving homes – but we believe passionately that our existing guidelines and campus direct adoption programs offer the best chance for that outcome. Therefore, for the reasons noted above, the University of California must respectfully oppose AB 147.

Thank you for your consideration of the University's views. Should you have any questions regarding the University's position on AB 147, please do not hesitate to call me at (916) 445-9924.

Sincerely,



Jason Murphy
Legislative Director

cc: Assembly Member Matt Dababneh
Members of the Assembly Higher Education Committee
President Janet Napolitano
Provost and Executive Vice President Aimée Dorr
Executive Vice President & CFO Nathan Brostrom
Senior Vice President Nelson Peacock