

Trump Must Drain The EPA Swamp

Last month marked a huge victory for man's best friend and dog-loving Americans as President Trump signed a spending bill that finally defunds nearly all of the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [cruel and wasteful canine experiments](#).

Amid pressure from myself, Congress, veterans groups and countless taxpayers, the [new law](#) enacted by POTUS dramatically restricts the use of taxpayer money for deadly dog experiments at the VA. In the recent past, VA's studies have included horrifying and needless practices like causing heart attacks in 6-month-old beagle puppies, collapsing dogs' lungs, cutting into their brains, and severing their spinal cords. This waste and abuse was especially egregious given the VA's ongoing failure to give veterans the proper physical and mental health services—including failing to provide service dogs—and other benefits they have earned by defending our freedom.

Unfortunately, the VA isn't the only entrenched government agency where mission creep has resulted in the senseless torture of helpless animals with our tax dollars and the madness must be stopped immediately.

Take the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whose laudable mission is "to protect human health and the environment." Sadly, many of the agency's programs and policies accomplish neither, and even undermine the EPA's objectives. In the name of reducing fuel emissions, it set federal ethanol standards that are helping [decimate butterfly populations](#), and to allegedly protect land and waterways it attempted to [fine one family \\$16 million](#) for building a small backyard pond on their own property.

As the Daily Caller [reported](#), the EPA's National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory (NHEERL) is another well-intentioned program that has gone awry. NHEERL is reportedly squandering millions in citizens' hard-earned tax money to conduct useless air pollution tests and other exposure experiments on over 20,000 rabbits, mice, and other animals a year.

A review conducted by conservative watchdog group White Coat Waste Project of some 20 EPA studies done in the past two years shows that animals were forced to inhale toxic fumes and were exposed to pollutants the EPA claims can be deadly in humans. The tests shockingly involved [force-feeding](#) animals lard to make them obese and then exposing them to air pollution, forcing animals to breathe diesel exhaust, [blasting](#) animals with loud noises and light and then exposing them to ozone, and giving baby animals [electric shocks](#).

EPA critic and [JunkScience.com](#) founder Steve Milloy told the Daily Caller, "Mice are not little people when it comes to studying the potential health effects, like cancer, of low-level exposures to chemicals in the environment." He went on to explain that, "Generally, in order to demonstrate a chemical can cause cancer in a rodent or other lab animal, the researcher will have to literally almost poison the animal" and that, "In addition to the physiological differences between mice and men, laboratory exposures to chemicals are typically nothing like real-life exposures." The EPA's animal tests are as dumb as they sound. They're also dangerous because their misleading results may be used as a basis for flawed public health and regulatory decisions that harm people and industry.

My friend Congressman Matt Gaetz (R-FL) recently [took to the floor](#) of the U.S. House of Representatives to call out the EPA's animal experiments, explaining, "We sure find a lot of ways to waste money in this town, but the EPA may just have

reached a new low. We are spending \$5 million dollars on a study to force-feed rats lard and coconut oil until they're morbidly obese. Then we pump their enclosures full of exhaust until they die.... I would invite my colleagues to join me in fighting this and so much other wasteful spending."

EPA [released a draft policy](#) last month aimed at reducing and replacing animal testing by the industries it regulates, but it has not made the same commitment to get rid of the expensive, awful and unnecessary animal testing its doing in its own labs. EPA administrator Scott Pruitt, a Trump favorite, needs to get his own house in order, too.

President Trump just made history by cutting funds for VA's dog testing and now he has another opportunity to clean up research labs at the EPA. The administration's 2019 budget proposes cutting NHEERL's funding by 37 percent, from \$115 million to \$71 million. If Congress heeds Trump's request, as it should, it will be yet another win for taxpayers, animals and anyone fighting to drain the DC swamp.

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