

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

1st March 2021

New Comment,

RE: ANIMAL TESTING (EDM 256)

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of animal research, specifically in relation to Early Day Motion (EDM) 256; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign EDMs, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs.

Like you, as an animal lover myself, I am opposed to animal testing where alternative approaches could be used. Having said that, I accept that animal research still plays a role in providing vital safety information for potential new medicines. It is worth remembering that, as a result of findings from animal studies, a large number of potential new drugs never get as far as being tested in humans. Some aspects of the toxicological assessment of new medicines cannot be adequately assessed in humans, and animal data will be the only kind available.

Without animal testing it is highly likely that a large number of potentially dangerous new medicines would be tested in healthy volunteers and patients in clinical trials, and I know Ministers believe that this would be quite unacceptable. However, animals are only used when there are no suitable alternatives, and by encouraging new cutting-edge approaches to science we will ensure that standards of animal welfare are improved.

I fully support all steps to establish new methods and to support the life sciences and research industry. Since 2017, the Government has invested around £1 billion through two Life Sciences Sector Deals, helping to generate significant levels of industry investment in the UK. I am committed to making the UK the leading global hub for life sciences. The Life Sciences Investment Programme (LSIP) aims to unlock the potential of the UK's best health and life science innovations, allowing companies to grow in the UK. This investment programme consists of up to £600 million of joint Government and industry investment.

It is important to remember that, existing scientific research methods ensure that by the time medicines reach clinical trials, risks are significantly reduced.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE