

July 11, 2013

Sent via E-mail

Elias Zerhouni, MD
President, Global R&D
Sanofi

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

I am writing to you as President of the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR). Our membership of more than 350 institutions and companies represents the biomedical research community on legislative, regulatory and legal issues affecting humane and responsible use of laboratory animals to advance human and animal health. I am also President of the Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR) which educates the public about animal research.

Recently, the *NIH Record* published the summary of a presentation you gave on June 4, 2013 at NIH. According to the reporter, Rich McManus, you concluded with 3 'lessons' including the following:

"We have moved away from studying human disease in humans", he lamented. "We all drank the Kool-Aid on that one, me included." With the ability to knock in or knock out any gene in a mouse – which "can't sue us," Zerhouni quipped – researchers have over-relied on animal data . "The problem is that it hasn't worked, and it's time we stopped dancing around the problem...We need to refocus and adapt new methodologies for use in humans to understand disease biology in humans."

Your words have raised alarm in the biomedical research community and are serving as a rallying cry for animal rights activists who believe animal research in all species is cruel, a waste of money and unnecessary to treat and/or cure diseases.

This statement would be difficult to manage if given by any scientist or physician, but the fact it comes from a former NIH director compounds this matter multi-fold.

In order to clear up misperceptions caused by your statement within our community and on Capitol Hill, I would be grateful if you would respond to me with any clarification you might have on the role of laboratory animals in biomedical research now and in the foreseeable future. NABR/FBR will share your clarification with our members, the press and Congress.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Frankie L. Trull
NABR/FBR