



Science Advancement & Outreach
A DIVISION OF PETA

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Public Hearing of NIAID Proposed Reorganization

Submitted online September, 17, 2026

These concerns are relevant to the proposal's plan to "establish the Laboratory of Viral Zoonoses and the IRF-Frederick Comparative Medicine Branch," which includes "centralized animal care and scientific support for high- and maximum-containment research at IRF-Frederick" within the Division of Intramural Research.

Expanding infrastructure for animal use at IRF-Frederick is impossible to reconcile with the goal of addressing zoonotic disease threats or improving human health. The global primate trade that supplies these experiments has repeatedly been associated with serious biosecurity risks, including the movement of animals carrying tuberculosis-causing mycobacteria, *Burkholderia pseudomallei* (a bacterium classified as a Tier 1 Select Agent), and other pathogens capable of infecting humans. Imported macaques have also been linked to multidrug-resistant bacterial infections, raising concerns about the international movement and amplification of antimicrobial-resistant organisms through the research-animal supply chain.

PETA has documented longstanding concerns involving disease surveillance, pre-importation screening, quarantine failures, and pathogen detection in imported primates. Expanding high-containment animal experimentation infrastructure does not address the root causes of zoonotic disease emergence. Instead, it deepens reliance on an international global wildlife trade that has repeatedly transported dangerous pathogens and multidrug-resistant organisms across borders.

NIAID should not institutionalize or expand a system that creates the very biosecurity risks it claims to study and prevent.