

# Queenie's Law: Ending Taxpayer-Funded Dog Experiments in Michigan

PhysiciansCommittee  
for Responsible Medicine



Some of the longest-running, most painful dog experiments in the country take place in Michigan—paid for by taxpayers. Queenie's Law (HB 4254 / SB 127) would prohibit such unproductive, deadly studies at public institutions and encourage humane, human-relevant research.

## Wayne State's Painful Experiments Don't Help Patients

Since 1991, Wayne State University has subjected dogs to painful, deadly heart failure and hypertension experiments **without producing any scientific advancements**. Wayne State has told legislators that the experiments show "potential," but after more than 30 years, hundreds of dead dogs, and **\$15 million in public money wasted**, taxpayers deserve better. The dogs endure multiple surgeries in which Wayne State employees cut open the animals' chest cavities, insert devices in and around major blood vessels, stab catheters into their hearts, and "tunnel" cables and wires under their skin and out between the dogs' shoulder blades.<sup>1</sup>

The dogs who survive the intensive surgeries are forced to run on treadmills while experimenters drastically raise their heart rates using implanted devices. This is repeated for days, weeks, or even months—depending on how long each dog can withstand it. **By design, every dog will eventually die during the experiments**—when their body gives out or an implanted device breaks or malfunctions.

Public records also reveal that **Wayne State's botched surgeries have led to many dogs suffering internal injuries that cause their chest cavities to fill with blood**, making it painfully difficult to breathe, before they are killed. Other dogs die in their cages.<sup>2</sup>

**Queenie, a stray from Gratiot County, was killed by Wayne State in 2010 after being used in experiments for seven months**. In a cruel new twist, public records show that Wayne State is now feeding the dogs a "high fat diet," which increases their risk of stroke. Wayne State may be the worst offender, but across Michigan, hundreds of dogs may be subjected to painful experiments.<sup>3</sup>

## How Queenie's Law Addresses the Problem

Experiments with animals are grouped into three categories: one in which the animals do not experience pain (often referred to as "C") and two categories in which pain is expected ("D" and "E"). Queenie's Law would update existing Michigan Public Health Code language first enacted in 1978<sup>4</sup> and would prohibit a "public body" from conducting painful dog experiments. The Department of Health and Human Services would have oversight authority.

## Research Without Pain

There is no need to cause pain to dogs to conduct research, and across the country, researchers gather scientific insights from animals through non-harmful studies. In addition, human-relevant methods like patient trials, population studies, and the use of donated and diseased human hearts are producing human-relevant results. **In 2015, the Texas Heart Institute, which is dedicated solely to addressing cardiovascular disease, stopped using dogs altogether,<sup>5</sup> stating that "the canine physiology is not the optimal match."**

## Myths and Facts:

**Myth:** *Dogs are necessary to advance human health research.*

**Fact:** Human-relevant methods such as trials involving patients, population studies, and cell-based and computer-based models mean that we do not have to subject dogs to painful experiments. Igor Efimov, PhD, at the George Washington University uses diseased hearts from patients undergoing transplants or hearts donated for research to collect human-relevant data.<sup>6</sup> **Dr. Michael Joyner of the Mayo Clinic conducts heart failure studies with human patients<sup>6</sup> and has criticized the Wayne State dog experiments.<sup>7</sup>**

**Myth:** Dogs are necessary for the development and testing of pharmaceuticals.

**Fact:** In a July 2021 statement, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wrote: “**The FDA does not mandate that human drugs be studied in dogs.**”<sup>8</sup> In addition, in 2022, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that many interpret to mean the FDA no longer must require the use of animals for preclinical drug testing.<sup>9</sup> The President and CEO of Vanda Pharmaceuticals has said: “**There is no evidence that long-term studies on dogs add any predictive value to human safety.**”<sup>10</sup>



**Myth:** The use of animals in laboratories is already heavily regulated.

**Fact:** Under the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), no experiments are prohibited—including those that inflict pain. The AWA is primarily a husbandry statute that regulates the size of cages, cleanliness, food and water, etc. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which is supposed to enforce the AWA, was cited by its own inspector general for closing investigations involving animal deaths and serious repeat violations and for unnecessarily reducing fines by an average of 86%.<sup>11</sup> In February 2019, *The Washington Post* reported: “USDA inspectors documented 60 percent fewer violations at animal facilities in 2018 from the previous year.”

**Myth:** State legislatures leave the oversight of animal experiments to the federal government.

**Fact:** In recent years, several states have passed laws that prohibit certain types of experiments or increase oversight of facilities that use animals. In 2022, Virginia signed into law five bills that regulate the use and sale of dogs “for experimental purposes.”<sup>12</sup> Also in 2022, California passed a law that would prohibit the use of dogs in the testing of chemicals, toxic substances, and food additives.<sup>13</sup> In 2018, Virginia outlawed the use of state funds for carrying out painful experiments on dogs.<sup>14</sup> In 2023, legislation was introduced in Pennsylvania that would prohibit the use of public funds for painful experiments on dogs.<sup>15</sup>

**Myth:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) awards grants only for important research.

**Fact:** When evaluating whether to continue to fund research, the NIH relies heavily on the number of papers published by the researcher, not on an evaluation of whether that research has improved human health. A 2012 report in the journal *Nature* showed that the NIH repeatedly awards mediocrity rather than innovation.<sup>16</sup> Speaking to Reuters about the report, a prominent scientist stated: “**It’s just amazing that most of NIH’s \$30 billion is going to scientists who haven’t had the greatest impact.**”<sup>17</sup>

**Myth:** Wayne State and other research facilities buy dogs from responsible, law-abiding breeders.

**Fact:** For years, Wayne State purchased dogs from Virginia-based Envigo, which was forced to shut down in 2022 and fined \$35 million. Envigo’s staff killed conscious puppies with injections to their hearts, withheld food from nursing pregnant dogs, and failed to document the cause of death for hundreds of puppies.<sup>18</sup> **Now, Wayne State purchases dogs from Marshall BioResources, a dog factory farm that came under fire in 2024 when whistleblower photos from its facility revealed piles of feces stacked under beagles’ cages and a dead dog shoved into a metal bin, his brown coat covered in mud or feces.**<sup>19</sup> In February 2025, the USDA Office of Inspector General released a report stating that 80% of dog breeders like Marshall had failed to fully correct previous animal welfare violations.<sup>20</sup>

## References

1. Experimental protocols obtained from Wayne State University via the Michigan Freedom of Information Act.
2. Veterinary records obtained from Wayne State University via the Michigan Freedom of Information Act.
3. Records obtained via the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal Care Public Search Tool.
4. MCL 333.2672 – 333.2678.
5. Malisow, C. (2015, May 4). *Tens of Thousands of Dogs are Still Used in Laboratory Testing Every Year*. Houston Press.
6. Lutz, D. (2011, Aug. 3). *New Study Calls into Question Reliance on Animal Models in Cardiovascular Research*. The Source.
7. Joyner, M. (2006). Counterpoint: The Muscle Metaboreflex Does Restore Blood Flow to Contracting Muscles. *Journal of Applied Physiology*, 100(1):358-60.
8. Taylor, S. (2021, July 11). *Drug-Testing on Puppies: New Report Asks for Alternative Testing at FDA Labs*. WJLA.
9. Wadman, M. (2023, Jan. 10). *FDA No Longer Needs to Require Animal Tests Before Human Drug Trials*. Science.
10. Sleep Review. (2019, Dec. 13). *Vanda Pharmaceuticals President Gets Award for Work To Prevent Dog Testing*.
11. USDA Office of Inspector General. (2014). *Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Oversight of Research Facilities Audit Report 33601-0001-41*.
12. Jaquith, O. (2022, April 4). *Youngkin Signs ‘Beagle Bills’ for Animal Welfare Reform*. WRIC.
13. Solis, N. (2022, Sept. 7). *California Bans Unnecessary Pesticide, Chemical Testing on Dogs and Cats*. Los Angeles Times.
14. S.B. 28, 2018 Session, Va. Gen. Assembly.
15. Jessop, L. (2023, June 23). *Lawmaker Urges Pennsylvania to Stop Funding Inhumane Animal Testing*. The Center Square.
16. Nicholson, J. & Ioannidis, JPA. (2012). Conform and Be Funded. *Nature* vol. 492.
17. Begley, S. (2012, Dec. 5). “Conformity,” “Mediocrity” Win Biomedical Funding, *Say Critics*. Reuters.
18. Roush, T. (2024, June 3). *Animal Breeder Envigo Fined Record-Setting \$35 Million Over Mistreating Thousands of Beagles*. Forbes.
19. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. (2024, Oct. 29). *Ghostbusters Star Ernie Hudson Asks Alma Mater to End Dog Experiments After Seeing “Disturbing” Whistleblower Images*.
20. USDA Office of Inspector General. (2025). *Animal Care Program Oversight of Dog Breeder Inspections Audit Report 33601-0001-22*.