



SOT Statement on the US EPA Memorandum “Directive to Prioritize Efforts to Reduce Animal Testing”

September 11, 2019

The SOT 2019–2020 Presidential Chain has released the following statement in response to the US Environmental Protection Agency Memorandum released on September 10, 2019, with the Subject Line “Directive to Prioritize Efforts to Reduce Animal Testing”¹:

Toxicologists are at the forefront of research and studies designed to determine the possible health and environmental effects of biological agents, chemicals, and compounds. The information generated serves as the basis for determining the conditions under which drugs, chemicals, and products can be safely used. Scientists rely on a variety of methods to determine safety and always strive to use the methods that are most predictive of human, animal, and environmental health. This involves both emerging technologies and animal models.

While supportive of reducing, refining, and replacing the use of animals in science, the Society of Toxicology (SOT) cautions the US EPA and other agencies to remain flexible in their policies and language regarding the funding of toxicological research used for safety and risk assessments. Studies that provide consistent, reliable, and accurate data regarding the health and environmental effects of biological agents, chemicals, and compounds should be funded, recognized, and used in decision-making—regardless of the technology or model involved.

The toxicology community is committed to finding the best and most humane, as well as reproducible, methods for determining how chemicals and other factors influence public, animal, and environmental health outcomes. SOT encourages the US EPA to weigh the reliability of results as strongly as the method used to garner the data while funding and evaluating research.

¹ Andrew R. Wheeler to the Associate Deputy Administrator, General Counsel, Assistant Administrators, Inspector General, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Staff, Associate Administrators, and Regional Administrators, memorandum, September 10, 2019, “Directive to Prioritize Efforts to Reduce Animal Testing.” <https://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics/administrator-memo-prioritizing-efforts-reduce-animal-testing-september-10-2019>.