**Medical Breakthroughs: Is Research with Animals Still Necessary?**

Many people, including US lawmakers, believe that animal studies are no longer necessary to support the biomedical progress that you and I continue to demand. It is common these days to hear people claim that animal studies are outdated, ineffective and a disgraceful waste of taxpayer dollars. Why do they believe this? Because most people don’t understand the process that leads to drug development and other treatments. They don’t see the relevance of basic research in their everyday lives, and animal rights groups have exploited this blind spot deliberately to convince the public and Congress to stop funding it. Legislative initiatives and inquiries are piling up to restrict studies involving animals because, in the words of one congressman, “there are probably other ways” for us to learn about disease and develop treatments that don’t rely on animals at all. Stem cell based technologies, like organs-on-a-chip, are commonly offered up as proof that more modern and predictive research strategies exist now that can replace animals in biomedical studies. So, why are we still studying animals and what should we tell people who ask us why we continue to do this work?