

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 26, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Madame Secretary:

We are writing to request that the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) immediately suspend five government contracts with Primate Products, Inc. pending the outcome of an investigation by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for violations of the Animal Welfare Act. This ongoing investigation is the result of recent reports, graphic photographs, and complaints that have been filed with the USDA describing the unconscionable treatment of animals at the Primate Products, Inc. facility in Doral, Florida.

Primate Products, Inc. specializes in the sale of products and services used in the management of captive primates during medical research. These products include housing containment units, collars, and others forms of restraints. Primate Products, Inc. also provides live primates to be used in research studies, and the company is registered with the USDA to conduct its own research.

Following a graphic news article in the South Florida Sun-Sentinel on September 3, 2010 entitled "Photos of Hurt Monkey Prompt Federal Inspection," federal inspectors found possible violations of minimum care standards required under the Animal Welfare Act and launched an investigation into these violations. The serious and disturbing allegations of animal mistreatment are attributed to prolonged use of restraints, fights among monkeys that occurred from insufficient housing conditions, and the failure of adequate employee oversight on the monkeys' activities.

Despite these allegations and a previous investigation for animal mistreatment, HHS maintains five contracts awarded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act with Primate Products, Inc. for the transportation and provision of several species of monkeys for medical research. In addition, several of these contracts, totaling over \$1.6 million, were awarded after federal inspectors were sent to the Doral, Florida facility to investigate accusations of animal mistreatment.

We therefore urge HHS to immediately suspend the five contracts awarded to Primate Products, Inc. until the USDA investigation is completed. Given the serious and extreme nature of the allegations, we believe that it is inappropriate for the government to continue any involvement with Primate Products, Inc. while it is being investigated for violating standard of care requirements for the services provided under their contracts.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to a response.

Sincerely,



Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress