



Craig Whittaker MP

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Testing Cosmetics on Animals (EDM 437)

Thank you for contacting me about animal testing and cosmetics.

As I am a Government whip, I cannot sign EDMs, however, I do watch carefully developments in animal welfare policy.

May I start by underlining this Government's conviction that animals are sentient beings which can suffer pain and distress? The UK already has some of the best animal welfare standards in the world, and we intend to remain a world leader in the future.

There should be no doubt that this Government is committed to animal welfare. In the past four months alone we have announced the following measures: an ivory ban, that CCTV will become mandatory in all slaughterhouses, a ban on bee harming neonicotinoids, the raising of sentencing from six months to five years for the most horrific acts of animal cruelty, and a ban on microbeads to protect sea life.

Specifically on cosmetics testing, I am immensely proud that the UK was the first country in the world to ban cosmetics testing in animals, which was implemented on a voluntary basis in 1998. Similarly this country was instrumental in introducing this ban across Europe under the 2009 cosmetics regulations, and it has been illegal to test cosmetics or their intended ingredients on animals in the EU since 2010. In addition, a ban on the marketing of cosmetics tested on animals came into force in 2010.

The Government maintains a strong commitment to maintaining a rigorous regulatory system under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA). The regulatory system ensures that animal research and testing is carried out only where no practicable alternative exists, and under controls which keep suffering to the minimum.

This is achieved through robustly applying the principles of the 3Rs which require that, in every research proposal that is submitted to the Home Office, animals are replaced with non-animal alternatives wherever possible; that the number of animals used is reduced to the minimum needed to achieve the results sought; and that, for those animals which must be used, procedures are refined as much as possible to minimise their suffering.

In terms of the UK's international leadership on this issue, I know that the Government is always keen to encourage the sharing of knowledge and best practice with other countries, in order to support the ending of cosmetics testing on animals in favour of alternatives across the world.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Whittaker', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

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