

Dennis Assanis, PhD
President of the University of Delaware
104A HULLIHEN HALL
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
NEWARK, DE 19716

May 23, 2018

Dear President Assanis,

The faculty of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences supports our colleague, Dr. Tania Roth, PhD, against the unfounded attacks and allegations PETA has made about her research and personal integrity. The faculty asks for the University's public support of Dr. Roth and her research, possibly with a letter from you to Dr. Roth and the University community, so Dr. Roth may publish it on her lab website.

Dr. Roth has recently been attacked by PETA because she conducts rodent research of early life neglect and adversity to model the abuse that many children experience in our country and around the world. PETA alleges her research on rodents is not translatable or applicable to humans, and thus, she is causing inhumane and undue harm to animals without any benefit to the human condition.

The faculty of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences disagree with PETA's allegations. Every year, more than 3.6 million referrals are made to child protection agencies involving more than 6.6 million children www.childhelp.org. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention links adverse childhood experiences (which include other household dysfunctions along with abuse and neglect) to a range of long-term health impacts. Psychological disorders, ischemic heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, liver disease and other health-related quality of life issues are tied to child abuse CDC:adverse childhood study.

Contrary to PETA's allegations, Dr. Roth's research has strong and important implications for childhood abuse and neglect. Her studies show that epigenetic changes in rat brains brought about by early parental adversity and/or alcohol exposure modify emotion, cognition and behavior that persist into adulthood. These experiences have profound ramifications for what happens to the brains of children impacted by early abuse, neglect and drinking during pregnancy. Through Dr. Roth's studies, the neural mechanisms of abuse and neglect will be understood and used for development of new and innovative treatments.

The scientific methods and translational importance of Dr. Roth's research questions have been fully reviewed and are financially supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Her humane animal welfare laboratory practices have been thoroughly reviewed, approved and regulated by the University's animal care and use committee (IACUC), the University's authorized agent of NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. The University's

IACUC has reviewed PETA's allegations of inhumane practices and concluded them to be unfounded. The IACUC is writing its report to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare.

Dr. Roth is a highly valued and honored member of the University and international science communities. In 2015, she was awarded the Early Career Impact Award from the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) Foundation. At the University, she was selected by the University's Francis Alison Society to receive the 2015 Gerard J. Mangone Young Scholars Award and subsequently received the University's 2018 Excellence in Advising Award. Now we as University have an opportunity to show tangible support for her career by standing with her publicly.

We ask the University to strongly and publicly support Dr. Roth and other faculty and students conducting critical, humane and regulated animal research on campus. Humane animal research is the bedrock of disease-related research in this country and around the world and is critical for psychological and medical progress for the betterment of human and animal health.

Sincerely,

The faculty of the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences