

Massachusetts Society for Medical Research, Inc.

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The Editors
The Boston Sunday Globe Magazine
P.O. Box 2378
Boston, MA 02107-2378

Dear Editors:

In his letter, Jonathan Balcombe falsely asserts that the environment of research rats and mice is so desolate as to undermine any conceivable scientific value that might come from the research.

He ignores the facts: all ethical researchers work hard to assure that their animals get the right husbandry and veterinary care and that their socialization and activity needs are met. For example, providing group housing, nesting materials, and enrichment items is actually the norm for rodents in contemporary research. The animals are cared for every day, including weekends and holidays, by well-trained professionals. And every project involving animals must first pass a rigorous review by a committee that includes both scientific experts and non-affiliated, independent community members.

Mr. Balcombe also made much of a British Medical Journal item entitled “Where is the evidence that animal research benefits humans?” He failed to say that the scientists and physicians who examined the article overwhelmingly disagreed with its flawed premise. In numerous examples, the people who are personally responsible for advancing science and medicine demonstrated that the evidence that animal research benefits humans is all around us.

Sincerely,

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President

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