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Wyden Bill Phases Out the Use of Live Animals in Military Medical Training

Washington, D.C. –U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) introduced bicameral, bipartisan legislation to replace the use of live animals in combat medical training. The Battlefield Excellence through Superior Training (BEST) Practices Act would require the Department of Defense to phase out the use of live animals in medical training, a practice that has been all but eliminated in civilian medical training programs.

A companion bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Hank Johnson (D- Ga.) and Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (R- Pa.).

“It’s wrong to kill animals when better training methods exist,” Wyden said.

“Today’s technology can provide extremely life-like training simulations that better represent the anatomy of a soldier and more realistically simulate the conditions on the battlefield. The DoD should phase out the use of live animals in favor of more realistic and humane technologies that will provide better overall trauma training.”

“The BEST Practices Act provides a framework for the Department of Defense to phase out its use of animal-based training in favor of superior, human-based simulator technologies that have made great strides in the last decade,” said Rep. Johnson. **“Using pigs and goats in live battlefield training is not the best option for our troops, and is inhumane treatment of animals.”**

The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine says that the U.S. Military

uses roughly 8,500 live animals every year in combat trauma training courses. The effectiveness of live-animal training has been questioned by civilian trauma centers in the U.S. and most have forgone the practice. Scientific evidence indicates that simulators are as good, or better at providing doctors with real-world training than using live animals.