

PETA targets U.S. agency on chimp research

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals targeted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for submitting chimps to biological agents. PETA said in a letter to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff a government program called Project BioShield was unethical, USA Today reported Thursday. "I urge you to put an immediate end to this completely unnecessary abuse of chimpanzees," Ingrid Newkirk, president of PETA, said in the letter. Project BioShield is a multi-agency program conducting tests on chimpanzees to develop treatments for anthrax, smallpox or other deadly pathogens. The National Institute of Health hosts the research in the program. PETA said the bone marrow extractions employed in the test are unnecessary because the Food and Drug Administration has antibodies for anthrax and other pathogens. A representative for the Department of Homeland Security referred all questions to the NIH because the department has nothing to do with medical testing, USA Today said. Don Ralbovsky with the NIH, who said he also received letters from PETA, said the program adheres to all laws and regulations against animal testing "to ensure (the chimps) are used in the smallest numbers possible and with the greatest commitment to their comfort."

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