

June 17, 2009

W. Ron DeHaven, D.V.M., CEO
American Veterinary Medical Association

One 1 page via e-mail: rdehaven@avma.org

Dear Dr. DeHaven:

PETA is extremely disappointed by your decision to side with animal-abusing industries with regard to the concerns of animal protectors. This is a bad decision that will not help the AVMA. I realize that you feel obligated in part to go along with those backward members who wish to dig in their heels over the fish-tossing stunt at your upcoming convention, but it is truly short-sighted to do so.

History does not look back with approval on the American Medical Association's earlier endorsement of cigarette smoking: Remember those doctors in the white coats? Or its endorsement of experiments on human beings who had no rights? Believe me, times are changing, and while you have been around for many years in which casual animal abuse and ignorance of animals' sentience and psychological needs was the norm, that is rapidly changing.

You told the media that the fish-tossing event is primarily about teaching valuable business principles, such as cooperation and engaging customers. There are other ways to do that, and you can do so without appearing to bend to PETA's will, if that truly concerns you. More importantly, this activity should be scrapped because it violates the principles that a veterinarian is expected to be governed by: compassion, sensitivity, and respect for all animals. Finally, because you are keeping the argument alive in the media, something that we relish but do not prefer to a resolution of the conflict, we will be at the convention, deriding the AVMA, pointing out all the ways in which it betrays its clients' (both human and nonhuman) trust.

We have friends in the AVMA, and we plan to identify those veterinarians who participate in this shameful event, should it go forward, and to take the issue of their disrespectful attitude toward animals back to their home clinics. We hope that you will cancel or alter the planned event so that it doesn't have to come to that. It is in your hands either to make the AVMA look good or to go along with the "cowboys" on this one.

Please contact me at 757-962-8301 or IngridN@peta.org to discuss this matter further or to let us know that you would like us to mail you the rubber fish or suggest an alternative bonding exercise.

Very truly yours,



Ingrid E. Newkirk
President



PETA

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TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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