



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR  
**TIM CARPENTER**  
SENATOR – 3RD DISTRICT

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June 20, 2011  
Hand Delivered

Governor Scott Walker  
115 East  
State Capitol

Dear Governor Walker:

I respectfully request that you veto from the state budget the provision that would exempt researchers from the animal cruelty statutes of our state.

As you may know, Wisconsin law already exempts legitimate scientific researchers from the statutes prohibiting animal mistreatment. This provision in the budget goes far beyond that, and would exempt researchers from the entirety of Chapter 951, the criminal laws relating to animal cruelty. (Chapter 951 includes provisions that require proper shelter, food and water and prohibit stealing animals, animal fighting, and abandonment.)

I have been contacted by an extraordinary number of constituents concerned about the inclusion of this item in the budget. If there is a problem that needs to be addressed for researchers, let the legislative process do its work: let the legislature hold public hearings and craft a remedy if necessary. This budget provision, in contrast, was snuck into by the Joint Finance Committee at the last minute with no reasonable notice or opportunity for public consideration. This secretive course of action does disservice to the goal of open government and public participation in the legislative process.

As Wisconsin law already exempts scientific researchers from the statutes prohibiting animal mistreatment, and I see no reason to go as far as to exempt researchers from the criminal laws relating to animal cruelty. As you may know, the first bill I passed in the legislature made it a felony to be cruel to animals. I do not believe that we should retreat from the goal of making sure that all animals are treated humanely.

On behalf of my constituents, I ask that you please veto this provision.

Best wishes,

Tim Carpenter  
State Senator