



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for your email about the testing of cosmetics on animals.

We are a nation of animal lovers, owning three dogs myself, I know I would be distraught if anything were to happen to them. As such, I fully understand the strength of feeling many people have on this issue.

I want to assure you that the Government recognises the public concern around the testing on animals of chemicals used as ingredients in cosmetics. I welcome the fact that no new licences will now be granted for animal testing of chemicals that are exclusively intended to be used as ingredients in cosmetics products.

The Government is also taking action to seek alternatives to animal testing for workers and environmental safety of chemicals used exclusively as cosmetic ingredients. This reflects the Government's wider commitment to replacing the use of animals in science wherever scientifically possible. The Government is confident that the UK science sector and industry has the talent to provide the solutions needed here.

The regulatory framework around cosmetics has long required manufacturers to demonstrate that their products are safe for use by consumers. Animal testing for this purpose was banned in the UK in 1998 and this ban remains in force.

Under chemical regulations, manufacturers and importers must assess and stringently mitigate the hazards to human health and the environment of the chemicals they place on the market. This includes chemicals used as ingredients in cosmetics. In some cases, where there are no validated alternatives, this has in the past required testing on animals as a last resort.

These regulations are separate from, and have a different purpose to, the consumer cosmetics regulations, which is why it had been possible that a chemical used in cosmetics could have been required to be tested on animals. On that basis, a small number of time-limited licences were issued between 2019 and 2022. However, a ban on new licences has now been introduced with immediate effect, and the Government is engaging urgently with the relevant firms to determine a path forward on the few remaining legacy licences.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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The Government is also undertaking to review at pace the effective administration of the ban over the longer term. This will give due regard to the needs of the science industry, the need to ensure worker and environmental safety, and the need to protect animals from unnecessary harm.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again. If you would like to keep up to date with my activities as your Member of Parliament then please subscribe to my Darlington Matters newsletter using this link: www.petergibson.org/signup

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

PETER GIBSON MP