

Venable Client UC Davis Wins Lawsuit Protecting Academic Freedom and Scientific Process

Venable LLP is pleased to announce that our client, UC Davis, has prevailed in a civil lawsuit brought by activists under the California Public Records Act. The suit was filed by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Peta, in January 2019, seeking access to unpublished research data from the work of two researchers at the California National Primate Research Center. The Superior Court of California, County of Yolo, ruled that releasing the material did not serve the public interest and would undermine academic freedom and the scientific process while increasing the risk that researchers could face physical harm and harassment from activists.

The court issued its ruling on Jan. 11, 2022. PETA had the opportunity to appeal the decision but has declined to do so.

“We’re pleased with the court’s decision enabling UC Davis researchers to pursue their work, which ultimately benefits our community,” said Prasant Mohapatra, vice chancellor for research at UC Davis. The Office of Research oversees animal care programs on campus.

The Venable trial team was led by Jean-Paul Cart and supported by Antonia Stabile.