RESEARCH ADVISORY PANEL OF CALIFORNIA

JUNE 19, 2026 - 1:30 PM

(REGULAR SESSION)

MEETING MINUTES

OPEN SESSION

1. **Call to Order, Establishment of a Quorum, and General Announcements**

Panel Chair Jennifer Mitchell called the meeting to order at 1:36 pm and asked for the establishment of quorum. Once quorum was established, Chair Mitchell made the general announcement that the RAPC 2025 Annual Report would be available on the RAPC website sometime around July 1st.

Panel Members present: Jennifer Mitchell, Boris Heifets, James Gasper, Kelly Lee, Daniele Piomelli, April Powell-Willingham.

Panel Members absent: Judy Aoyagi

Quorum was established.

Panel Member Kelly Lee left the meeting at 2:31 pm, prior to the vote on a motion. Quorum was maintained at five members.

RAPC staff present: Executive Officer Tanveer Khan

2. Approval of the April 10, 2026 Panel Meeting Minutes

Panel members had no comments on the April 10, 2026 meeting minutes draft, which had been distributed to Panel members ahead of time. Panel Member Heifets made the motion to approve. Hearing no objections, Chair Mitchell stated the meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

3. Schedule II Controlled Substances in Non-Human Research

Chair Mitchell proposed reading the motion that had been approved at the April 10, 2026 Panel meeting and then she would suggest some wording that would be cleaner and then ask for comments from the Panel and from the public.

Panel Member Piomelli said that after a lot of thought, he did not think a waiver would be the ideal solution because restricting the waiver to anesthesia would only capture a small part but not a majority of uses that should be allowed without RAPC having to go through the protocols. He pointed to the common use of schedule II controlled substances in testing and that there is a need to capture a fairly large set of drugs that are not used for anesthesia.

Chair Mitchell said one of the questions is whether the drugs are being tracked for safety in animal models or also for concerns about possible diversion. She was open to suggestions that would enable constitutions not to come to RAPC for uses that are commonplace.

Panel Member Heifets suggested the IACUCs periodically send something to RAPC so that RAPC could issue a blanket approval that would stay within the statute so that every principal investigator would not have to submit to RAPC every time for common uses.

Panel Member Piomelli added it would be disruptive for research to have to stop to get RAPC approval every time a schedule II for a standard use is needed.

Panel Chair Mitchell summarized that the Panel wants to make the waiver broad enough that it doesn't slow people down without running in conflict with the legislative language. She asked for input from Panel Member Powell-Willingham.

Panel Member Powell-Willingham said it is possible and suggested there is a balance to be struck between the possibility for diversion and public safety, and on the other hand, efficiency and that which doesn't stop everyone in their tracks. This has to be done to strike a balance without making things unworkable or sacrificing the risk factors.

Panel member Gasper requested showing the wording of the bill. The Executive Officer displayed the bill on screen (AB 1103 – Ward 2025). Chair Mitchell reminded the Panel that this bill sunsets in 18 months.

AB 1103 (Ward 2025).pdf

Panel members discussed the risks of diversion and the controls and safeguards already in place by research institutions to minimize diversion. In response, Chair Mitchell suggested a waiver is provided that the requested amount of each controlled substance does not exceed the amount outlined in the approved IACUC protocol.

The Panel Chair then opened up the discussion for public comment.

Public Comment:

Public participant #1 introduced herself as Agnes Balla who works at the Research Policy Office at the University of California Office of the President and gave the University of California perspective. She indicated that AB 1103 impacts 400 active studies with about 178 studies using schedule II controlled substances for routine veterinary care and not as the primary focus of the research at University of California. She discussed the operational challenges created by this bill and the controls already in place for schedule II controlled substances. She offered wording to add to the RAPC website and indicated she did not believe the current waiver goes far enough and provided several examples of why, including a loss of flexibility to quickly change therapy when needed. She indicated that the Controlled Substances Program Administrators manage this type of work and summarized the process of management. She ended by expressing her concerns about safety for animal researchers should a list become public. She asked about the protective factor if such a list is provided to RAPC.

Panel Member Piomelli suggested providing information without providing names of studies and researchers and discussed who could provide such a list to RAPC.

Chair Mitchell said the protective factor is to abide by the legislative language in a way that doesn't harm our researchers. She agreed that a controlled substance administrator would be the correct entity providing RAPC the information.

Public participant #2 introduced himself as Marcelo Wood, a professor and the Chair of the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior at University of California, Irvine and Director of the UC Irvine Center for Addiction Neuroscience. Dr. Wood expressed concerns that what is happening with schedule II drugs in non-human research will add massive delays and additional paperwork and this would have a tremendous impact. He described the controls already in place for schedule II controlled substances in his laboratory. He requested finding a middle ground to carry out the letter of the law but also find out an efficient way to carry out these vital experiments.

Panel member Gasper asked about the frequency of DEA visits and the Panel discussed the unannounced nature of DEA visits and that they have requirements for storage of controlled substances in locked areas. Panel Member Gasper said that there is a mismatch between what was written in the law and what's actually needed in practice.

Chair Mitchell asked for comments from the Panel to change the wording of the waiver.

Panel Member Heifets pointed out that Environmental Health and Safety typically holds the schedule II license and panel members discussed the appropriate term for the schedule II license holder. Panel members offered suggestions to the wording of the waiver with input from public participants. Once discussion stopped, Panel Member Piomelli read the language aloud and made a motion to vote on the language: "A waiver will be created for the use of Schedule II controlled substances in institutional settings that are evaluated and approved by the institutional IACUC or another institutional official provided that the amount of each substance does not exceed the amount approved by the institutional official. This waiver will specifically call out each Schedule II controlled substance by name and mandate that each institution's official provide to RAPC a biannual list of all Schedule II compounds used in research."

Motion: Update the language of the waiver for animal studies using Schedule II Controlled Substances. "A waiver will be created for the use of Schedule II controlled substances in institutional settings that are evaluated and approved by the institutional IACUC or another institutional official provided that the amount of each substance does not exceed the amount approved by the institutional official. This waiver will specifically call out each Schedule II controlled substance by name and mandate that each institution's official provide to RAPC a biannual list of all Schedule II compounds used in research."

Vote on Motion:

- Boris Heifets - Aye
- James Gasper - Aye
- Jenny Mitchell - Approve
- Danielli Piomelli – Approve
- April Powell-Willingham – Approve

Panel Chair Mitchell announced the motion had passed.

Public comment:

Public participant #3 asked what RAPC will do with the list of schedule II drugs used under each approved DEA license.

Chair Mitchell responded that at the time RAPC did not have a great answer except that RAPC would provide that, through the Executive Officer, to the DEA if requested to do so just for

cross-check purposes. She reiterated that it would allow RAPC to abide by the legislative language as it currently stands.

Public participant #1 asked whether RAPC could still consider a clarifying change on the website at some point that those studies that commenced before AB 1103 and studies where the scheduled drug is not the study drug of interest (study drug of research), would again not fall under RAPC review. She requested putting her question into the chat and provided the following language for her ask: "Any planned research project started on or after January 1, 2026 to be conducted in California where the subject of the research is a Schedule I or Schedule II controlled substance (not a Schedule III, IV, or V controlled substance) must be submitted to the Research Advisory Panel of California for review and approval."

Chair Mitchell responded that RAPC could consider clarifying language to the website but will have to get back on what exactly what it would say and not say.

CLOSED SESSION

Panel members entered closed session at 2:47 pm under Government Code Section 11126, subd. (c)(20) as amended by California AB 1103 (Ward) (2025).

OPEN SESSION

Meeting Adjournment

Panel members reentered open session and Chair Mitchell asked for quorum to be reestablished at 3:10 pm.

Panel Members present: Jennifer Mitchell, Boris Heifets, James Gasper, Daniele Piomelli, April Powell-Willingham.

Panel Members absent: Judy Aoyagi, Kelly Lee

A quorum was established.

Chair Mitchell announced the next meeting date on Friday August 14, 2026 at 1:30 pm and after asking for public comment and hearing none, adjourned the meeting at 3:11 pm.

Approved. T.K., 08/14/2026