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On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2167

I write in support of this bill. The OSU CCVM is the only accredited veterinary university in Oregon and serves students from all over the country and world. It is a university that participates in valuable exchange between other universities and is one of the only universities on the west coast. It trains students and provides community education to address the shortage of veterinarians in Oregon and across the country. It is important to address this shortage from a human and animal health aspect to address the negative impact on Oregon agriculture which accounts for 13% of the state's GDP. The Oregon Employment Department ranks veterinarians as one of Oregon's fastest growing occupations and estimates a 25% growth over the next 10 years, and OSU is one of only 33 accredited veterinary medical school in the US. Opportunities exist for specialized training, such as zoo, exotics, and wildlife medicine, marine sciences, clinical nutrition, and various clinical specialties (cardiology, oncology, theriogenology, anesthesiology, internal medicine, and surgery). OSU gives students a well-rounded education that emphasizes the importance of core training in comparative biology and medicine, including all primary clinical disciplines and domestic animal species.

Veterinarians are imperative to public health and addressing, identifying and treating zoonotic diseases. A current threat is HPAI which has jumped into mammals, including cattle and humans. Diseases such as chronic wasting disease and mosquito-borne diseases threaten public health and the health of the environment, impacting hunting and outdoor recreation. The OVDL is Oregon's only laboratory positioned to address diseases of concern to Oregon's animals, public, and environment. Its ability to address these concerns is gravely threatened by chronic insufficient funding and badly outdated facilities. Support for veterinary medical education and cutting-edge disease diagnostics in Oregon has lagged the rest of the nation for decades, leaving the state vulnerable to emerging disease threats and with too few veterinarians to support animal agriculture. OSU ranks 31 out of 33 veterinary colleges in state funding at \$3.4 million; the national average is \$13.4 million annually. Revenue generated from tuition to the college is not nearly enough to ensure excellence in its service and teaching. Please support the OSU CCVM and OVDL with continued and appropriate funding to support protecting public and animal health through disease surveillance, diagnosis, and the training of future veterinarians. The funds will address the severe shortage of veterinarians in rural Oregon, support ongoing veterinary education, and enhance our capacity to combat significant health threats to animals and humans.