

March 16, 2025

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Letter of Support for House Bill 3871 – Establishment of an Animal Welfare Trust

Dear Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), I respectfully submit our support for House Bill 3871, which establishes an Animal Welfare Trust to provide grants to entities that provide veterinary support services related to animals in low-income households or underserved communities.

The OVMA is committed to the advancement of animal welfare in our state and the support of the human-animal bond. Access to veterinary care is inextricably linked with the well-being of both animals and the people in our communities who care for them.

Numerous non-profit entities throughout the State are working to provide veterinary care to animals in low-income households and underserved communities. Many of these entities work closely with veterinarians to deliver this care which includes, but is not limited to, spaying and neutering pets, administering vaccinations (which has public health ramifications) and supplying emergency treatments. Additionally, a large number of veterinary practices provide discounted services to clients with financial challenges and have “Angel Funds” available for use by low-income individuals. However, there is a limitation to what these non-profit organizations and veterinary practices can do to meet the need of veterinary care in our communities.

HB 3871 establishes a state-administered program dedicated to the goal of improving access to veterinary care in Oregon. Some advantages of such a program include providing a clearinghouse for the collection and disbursement of funds to animal assistance organizations and veterinary clinics and developing a central location for the compilation of data on animal-related concerns in low-income and under-represented populations in the State.

The OVMA believes HB 3871 would greatly improve the accessibility of veterinary care to people in our local communities. Our only concern with the bill is with Section 6 (2): “The report may include relevant issues and trends of significance, including emerging scientific research and public policy related to animal welfare.” We believe this directive detracts from the underlying purpose of the bill,

which is to help financially challenged individuals get the veterinary care their animals need, and that any mandates involving the shaping of public policy requires a broader discussion. This concern, however, does not override our support of HB 3871.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 3871. If you have any questions regarding our position of support, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynn".

Lynn Healy, DVM / President
Oregon Veterinary Medical Association

