

## **HB 501 – Proponent Testimony**

**March 13, 2018**

### **Chairman Hill, Vice-Chairman Koehler, Ranking Member Patterson and members of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee:**

My name is Melissa Best and I am from Youngstown, Ohio. I am here to ask you to support HB 501. I have been a registered veterinary technician for 8 years. I worked in a veterinary hospital for 6 years before accepting my current position as program director for the veterinary technology program at Kent State University's Trumbull branch. I am also a registered nurse and current work part-time at Mercy Health Hospital for the past 4 years. This fall, I will receive my Master of Science in Nursing degree. My education for both professions was very similar. They both required the minimal of a 2- year Associates degree and a credentialing examination after graduation.

HB 501 is important to me because I am in a unique place where I see both worlds and can attest to the common values between the professions. Furthermore, I support HB 501 because the title "registered veterinary nurse" more accurately reflects the true nature of our services in the veterinary practice. It allows the public to better understand our role, training, and scope of abilities.

When people asked what I do I tell them I am a registered nurse. Most individuals understand this title and no questions are asked. When I go on to tell them I am also a registered veterinary technician I can see the confusion in their faces. This usually results in many questions and statements such as "you work on equipment?" To quickly clarify their misperception, I use the example "I am an animal nurse".

Webster's dictionary defines "Nurse" as a person who cares for the sick or infirm; a licensed health-care professional who practices independently or is supervised by a physician, surgeon, or dentist and who is skilled in promoting and maintaining health (2018). Webster did not have a definition for "Veterinary Technician". This furthermore demonstrates the lack of understanding to the title veterinary technician. We are skilled health-care professional who promote and maintain health under the supervision of a veterinarian. Working in both professions, I provide the same care and empathy to all my human and animal patients with upmost respect and to the best of my abilities. As a registered nurse, it would be a privilege to share to title "nurse".

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 501. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Melissa Best

Melissa Best, BGS, RN, RVT