THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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Testimony of Dr. Rustin M. Moore
Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at The Ohio State University
Senate Higher Education Committee
May 14, 2019

Chair Kunze, Vice-chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams and committee members:

Good morning Chair Kunze, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Williams and fellow committee members. Thank you for the kind opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Dr. Rustin Moore and I am honored to be the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at one of the top land-grant public research universities in the world, The Ohio State University.

There are only 30 veterinary colleges in the United States, and importantly we are the only one in Ohio, and one of 25 located at land-grant universities. We were established 134 years ago and we are the largest, with the most alumni, consistently ranked in the top 5 (currently #4) nationally, and, earlier this year we were named one of the top 10 (#8) programs in the world.

There are about 3,300 veterinarians in Ohio, and more than 80% of them are graduates of our college. Considering direct and indirect economic contributions, veterinary medicine contributes more than $13 billion dollars per year to Ohio's economy and plays a pivotal role in protecting and enhancing the state's nearly $110 billion agricultural industry. Our college has a significant impact on the state in many ways – I could spend my entire time today sharing those impacts, but today I want to focus on how state funding impacts our students, our faculty and staff, our programs, as well as Ohio's economy and the health and wellbeing of animals and people.

Simply put, our students and our college are at a financial crisis point and we need your help. So, I respectfully encourage your support to further invest in the future of Ohio's animal and human health. Additional state funding for The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine would help ensure a veterinary medical education is accessible, affordable, and achievable to those interested in pursuing a career in veterinary medicine within our state, and that would position us to contribute in an even more meaningful and impactful way to the animals, people, businesses, and communities throughout Ohio.

Last year, our college launched a five year strategic plan supporting our ambition to BE THE MODEL™ comprehensive college of veterinary medicine in the world, impacting animal and human health, through innovation, collaboration and excellence. Resource stewardship is one of the foundational principles of the plan and is engrained in everything we do. Our faculty and staff work harder, and more efficiently, every year. In the past five years, research funding and clinical revenues have increased substantially.

Although we do our best to limit tuition increases, Ohio residents could attend the University of California-Davis or North Carolina State University, both top 5 programs, and pay less tuition as an out-of-state student than if they attend Ohio State. When Ohio students choose to go out-of-

state for their veterinary education, we are losing a vital state asset, impacting the future veterinary workforce.

The high tuition of the Ohio State veterinary program and the high debt levels of its graduates are a direct result of comparatively low levels of state support. The total in-state tuition for a four-year veterinary degree at Ohio State is currently $145,605 not including books, supplies, room, and board. An annual survey by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) of veterinary program graduates found that students graduating in 2018 had an (average) DVM program related debt burden (excludes those with no debt) of $184,818. The average debt burden of Ohio State graduates was $204,917, 11% higher than the national average for veterinary graduates.

There is a risk that the high cost of a veterinary education and the need to assume a large amount of debt will discourage interested students from entering the field. This is already an issue with regard to having people from rural and lower socioeconomic areas from even considering a career in veterinary medicine because of the high cost and ensuing debt, and the relatively low earning potential, (average starting salary of ~$84,000) particularly in the areas where they grew up. These are the very areas that are underserved by veterinary medicine and we need people from these areas to understand that a veterinary medical education is accessible and affordable. The college has been focused on accessibility and affordability for Ohioans to pursue a veterinary medical education at Ohio's only college of veterinary medicine. We have been committed to limiting increases to in-state tuition to 2% per year and we have focused our philanthropic efforts on scholarships, having increased from about $388,000 to $2.1 million over the last few years, which is about a 540% increase. We have and will continue to do our part, what we are requesting is the state to recognize the unique assets the college provides and to invest modestly to help sustain the college's excellence and broad impact on Ohio's animals, people and the economy.

Ohio is home to one of the top ranked veterinary programs in the world. BUT, we receive the lowest amount of state support per student compared to our Top 10 ranked veterinary college peers. We are in the bottom 10 percent of all public veterinary colleges, and two private veterinary colleges receive more state funding than Ohio State, one of which receives nearly three times the amount we receive and they educate fewer veterinary students.

In addition to the negative consequences of low-state funding on tuition and debt for our students, it also puts us in the position of having the next to the worse faculty-to-student ratio among all US colleges of veterinary medicine. This leads to challenges of recruiting and retaining the best faculty, burnout and turnover. To get to the median faculty-to-student ratio of our top 10 peers, we would need to add more than 80 faculty positions. We realize this is unrealistic, but our goal of adding 25 faculty positions is reasonable and would have a positive impact on our program and what we can provide our students and constituents in Ohio.

How much additional state funding would be required for our college to move closer to the median state funding on a per student basis of our peers and to sustain and strengthen our position in the land-grant missions of education, research, service and outreach? **Approximately $13 million per fiscal year**. However, we understand that in the current landscape, this is not realistic or achievable. Therefore, we humbly request your support of an amendment to the state's biennial budget that provides an additional $2 million in funding the first year and $4 million the second year and thereafter. Although these additional funds will not accomplish all of our needs, it will allow Ohio's only college of veterinary medicine to recruit and

retain the best faculty, continue to perform research that has a positive impact on animal and human health, and provide our students with a more accessible and affordable education.

Three out of four households have at least one pet and Ohioans spend over $4 billion annually on their pets. Not only is Ohio's veterinary industry working to prevent disease outbreaks and ensure a safe and plentiful food supply, it's working to maintain the health and well-being of our four-legged family members. And certainly our reach goes well beyond Ohio as our college is generating breakthrough research discoveries in infectious disease, cancer and more, that impact state, national and global animal and human health.

Many of you have heard some of this information during tours of the college and Veterinary Medical Center and during prior testimony. Those who have visited our college have seen firsthand what we do and the impact we have on animal and human health. We want everyone to be aware of the economic and social impact of veterinary medicine in Ohio, our position as the only college of veterinary medicine in Ohio, and the economic challenges we face. These economic challenges have had, and continue to have a profound negative impact on Ohio veterinary students, Ohio citizens and our agricultural industry. Please help us address them.

Thank you for your time and interest and for inviting us here today to share the results of this most recent economic and social impact study of veterinary medicine in Ohio. I invite each of you for a personal behind-the-scenes tour of the College and our Veterinary Medical Center hospitals. I am certain you will come away with great pride in Ohio's only College of Veterinary Medicine — and you might even get to see a horse running on a treadmill!

Please feel free to reach out to me any time. My contact information is provided at the end of the written version of my testimony.

I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

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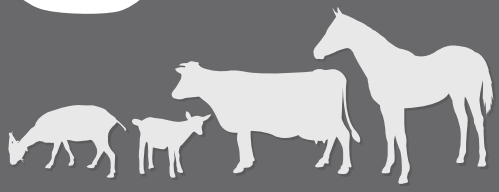
Vital Veterinary Assets at Risk in Ohio

Ohio's *only* College of Veterinary Medicine in critical need of enhanced State Funding

3 out of every 4 households have at least one pet. Pet owners invest more than **$4 billion** annually in the state

Significant contributors to **vibrant local communities** through engagement and economic investment



Protecting Ohio's **$110 billion** agriculture industry by preventing disease outbreaks and ensuring a safe and plentiful food supply

More than **$13 billion** contributed (direct & indirect) to Ohio's economy through veterinary profession

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

More than 80% of Ohio veterinarians graduated from Ohio State

Generating **breakthrough research discoveries** in infectious disease, cancer and more, impacting state, national & global animal and human health

#5 Ranked in the **top five** by *U.S. News & World Report* for over a decade

Re-establish **affordability & accessibility** for all Ohioans including students from rural areas and areas underserved by veterinary medicine

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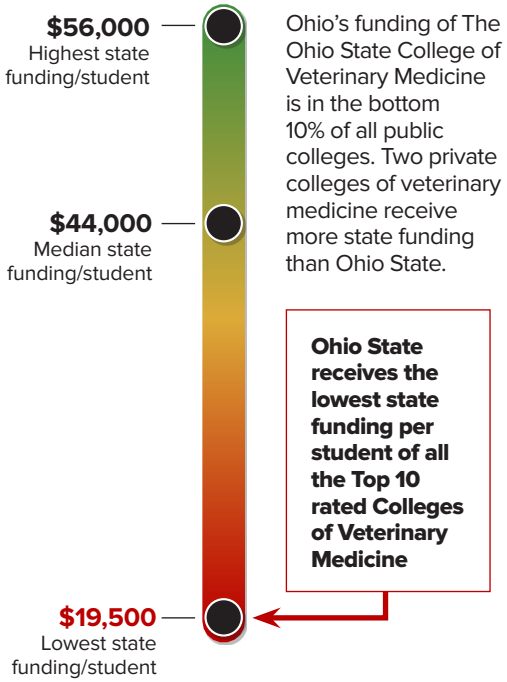
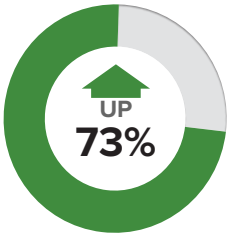
Cost of Four-Year Veterinary Medical Education

State Investment Critical for Continued Success

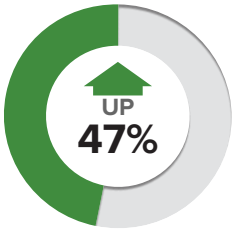
State funding per student of Top 10 rated Colleges of Veterinary Medicine



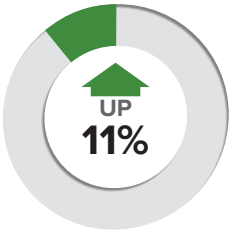
The college has done all it can to grow revenue sources over the past 5 years



Donor-derived Revenue



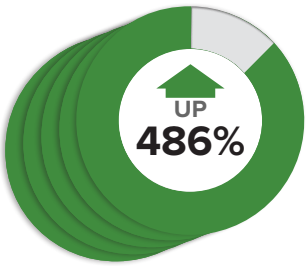
Hospital Revenue



Research Funding

Endowment Value

Enrollment & Curriculum Dollars



Philanthropic Scholarship Dollars