



Ohio Senate Budget Testimony

Senate Health Committee

April 30, 2025

Chairman Huffman, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Ohio Veterinary Medical Licensing Board (hereafter, “Board”) and our FY2026-FY2027 budget. My name is Jacob Bell, and I serve as Executive Director of the Board.

The mission of the Board is to ensure that the citizens of Ohio are served by professional, trustworthy and competent veterinarians and veterinary technicians. The Board’s activity and two staff are self-sustained fiscally through licensure fees and receive no general revenue funding. The Board consists of five veterinarians, one registered veterinary technician, and one public member. These members are appointed by the Governor and serve three years terms.

As of April 2025, the Board has issued close to 11,000 licenses in the State of Ohio; including licenses for 5,410 Veterinarians, 4,769 Veterinary Technicians and 291 Business Facility Permits. The Board is responsible for issuing licenses in a timely manner, investigating complaints involving licenses of the Board, carrying out disciplinary hearings when necessary, approving continuing education courses, and establishing a working relationship with all Federal, State and local regulatory agencies relating to veterinary medicine. Additionally, the Board contracts with the Ohio Department of Agriculture to handle compliance inspections and investigations ordered by the Board.



For FY2026-FY2027, the Board respectfully requests an appropriation of \$653,000 in FY2026 and \$675,000 in FY2027, for a total request of \$1.328 million. This is roughly a 9% decrease of FY2024-FY2025 budget request of \$1.452 million. Additionally, the Board requests a modest increase in our appropriation authority for operational costs of \$85,000 in FY2026 and \$23,000 in FY2027. This additional appropriation authority will allow the Board to hire an additional employee to manage complaints, as there was an increase of approximately 40% in complaints during the 2024 calendar year. In order for the Board to provide the best customer service to the citizens of Ohio and our licensees, this position is essential.

Some misconceptions may exist about what the Board has the authority to regulate. The Board does not have jurisdiction over: fee disputes, grooming, boarding issues, refusal to provide a prescription, breeders, or why a veterinarian chooses to terminate a client's relationship with the veterinary facility. However, these cases are still assigned a number, and the Board reviews them, and a response is sent to all complaints.

A final note, according to Forbes, in 2025 approximately 66% of U.S. households own a pet (dog, cat, horse, others), and more than 62% of Ohioans own a pet. The Board's budget request reflects the resources required to adequately address the needs of all of the pet owners and licenses in the State of Ohio. Chairman Huffman and members of the Committee I appreciate your time and consideration of the OVMLB budget request, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.