

AVMA



American Veterinary Medical Association

Governmental
Relations Division
1910 Sunderland Place, NW
Washington, DC
20036-1642
phone 202.789.0007
800.321.1473
fax 202.842.4360

AVMA Headquarters
1931 N. Meacham Rd.
Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL
60173-4360
phone 847.925.8070
800.248.2862
fax 847.925.1329
www.avma.org

November 3, 2011

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
The Honorable Roy Blunt
The Honorable Sherrod Brown
The Honorable John Carter
The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Susan Collins
The Honorable John Culberson
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
The Honorable Norm Dicks
The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
The Honorable Sam Farr
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
The Honorable Tom Harkin
The Honorable John Hoeven
The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
The Honorable Daniel Inouye
The Honorable Tim Johnson
The Honorable Jack Kingston
The Honorable Herb Kohl
The Honorable Tom Latham
The Honorable Steven LaTourette
The Honorable Jerry Lewis
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
The Honorable Jerry Moran
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Ben Nelson
The Honorable John Olver
The Honorable Ed Pastor
The Honorable David Price
The Honorable Mark Pryor
The Honorable Adam Schiff
The Honorable Richard Shelby
The Honorable Frank Wolf
The Honorable Bill Young

Subject: Conference on HR 2112 consolidated appropriations for Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science and Transportation-Housing and Urban Development

Dear Conferees,

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) urges Senate and House conferees to quickly pass H.R. 2112 which includes consolidated appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012. We further urge conferees to adopt the agriculture funding levels set forth in the Senate version of the bill.

AVMA supports funding for USDA programs that play critical roles in increasing access to veterinary services; advancing animal research; ensuring animal welfare; fostering training and education of

veterinarians working on the front lines to protect public and animal health and defend the nation against agro-terrorism; and securing our nation's food supply.

We applaud lawmakers for including needed funding for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, and for Animal Health and Disease Research.

AVMA opposes any provision that would disrupt the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Congressional mandate to base its assessments of human and animal drugs, devices, vaccines, and process applications on the best-available science underlying an application. We request that the prohibition on use of funds by the FDA to approve any application for approval of genetically engineered salmon be removed from the conferenced bill.

We are concerned about the recent significant decline in the welfare of unwanted horses in the U.S., and ask that Section 739 in the House version of the bill be removed in conference. This language was not included in the Senate version of the bill. Removal of this section will permit USDA to resume inspection of horse processing facilities.

AVMA strongly supports a well-funded Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) system. U.S. livestock production feeds our country and a great deal of the world. Continued federal funding is essential to trace a diseased animal back to its farm of origin within 48 hours of a discovered infection -- this is critical to controlling an outbreak and eradicating a disease. ADT will not only limit the spread of disease to more animals, but also will minimize the impact on public health, animal suffering, the food supply chain, and the financial health of livestock and related industries.

Finally, AVMA urges conferees to prioritize funding for the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the Agriculture and Food Research Institute (AFRI), as well as the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) at the FDA. Deep cuts to these agencies will have deleterious impacts on their ability to carry out the wide array of key functions including ensuring that meat, eggs and dairy products are safe for human consumption as well as their ability to oversee the health and welfare of the animals that produce these products so integral to our nation's diet and economy.

AVMA and its more than 81,500 member veterinarians applaud Senate and House lawmakers for prioritizing animal agriculture. AVMA deeply appreciates your interest in veterinary medicine and your sustained support of programs that safeguard animal welfare, animal and public health, food safety and security.

Sincerely,



Mark T. Lutschaunig, VMD MBA
Director
Governmental Relations Division
American Veterinary Medical Association