



March 20, 2017

Honourable Marlin Schmidt
Minister of Advanced Education
Office of the Minister Advanced Education
403 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Re: Veterinary Education for Alberta Students

Dear Honourable Minister Schmidt,

The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA) is the Professional Regulatory Organization responsible for the practice of veterinary medicine in the province under the authority of the *Veterinary Profession Act*. As such, we have a keen interest in the education of veterinarians and their employment in Alberta for the benefit of all Albertans.

The ABVMA would like to express its ongoing appreciation to the government of Alberta for the support it has shown towards educating veterinary students, and would like to strongly endorse further commitment by the government for continuance of this support. Veterinarians provide essential health and welfare services for the animals of the province, including both food and companion animals. In addition, Alberta veterinarians provide a significant contribution to public health, research, environmental sustainability, food production and the associated safety and security.

The ABVMA recognizes that Alberta is in the unique position of supporting two veterinary schools, the University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN). The ABVMA is requesting assurances from the Ministry of Advanced Education that support for the veterinary education of Alberta students will continue to be provided to both UCVM and WCVN.

Alberta's ongoing support of both UCVM and WCVN will provide capacity to educate sufficient qualified veterinarians to meet demands of the public for veterinary medical services today and in the future. It also provides opportunities to Alberta students to pursue an education and careers in veterinary medicine.

ABVMA recognizes that between UCVM and WCVN, there are currently 50 seats (30 at UCVM and 20 at WCVN) per annum for Alberta students to receive education in veterinary medicine. The ABVMA is of the opinion that support of both UCVM and WCVN is imperative, and that there must also be capacity to increase the total number of seats to Alberta students.

ABVMA provided support to the development of the UCVI program with the understanding that the funding of 20 seats per annum at WCVI would be continued in perpetuity. ABVMA would like to see the Alberta government continue to provide the current level of funding to WCVI and to support the growth and an increase in the number of seats at UCVI.

We strongly support the Government of Alberta's ongoing commitment and vision to ensure the viability of the veterinary profession into the future. We would welcome a meeting to discuss the ABVMA position further.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Dziwenka', with a stylized, cursive script.

Margitta Dziwenka, DVM, DABT
President

cc: Honourable Christina Gray, Minister of Labour
Honourable Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Dr. Baljit Singh, Dean, University of Calgary Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
Dr. Doug Freeman, Dean, Western College of Veterinary Medicine