



April 25, 2017

The Honorable George Ervin "Sonny" Perdue III  
United States Secretary of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

Congratulations on your historic appointment and confirmation as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. On behalf of the 49 member institutions of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), I offer the assistance of our nation's academic veterinary medical community in helping you and your administration promote the prosperity and wellbeing of American agriculture.

As the first veterinarian to ever serve in this cabinet position, your appointment represents a significant milestone for the profession of veterinary medicine. Your training as a veterinarian and broad experience in agriculture, business and industry provides you with a unique understanding of the important role our profession plays in helping the nation's animal agricultural community contribute to the production of the most abundant and safest food supply in the history of the world.

More than 3,000 veterinarians are currently working for the federal government, and our colleges are preparing the next generation of veterinarians that will fill those jobs. Our faculty members work closely with the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, the Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Agricultural Research Service and other USDA agencies on programs that promote animal health and advance the wellbeing of the American people. We work closely with the American Veterinary Medical Association, major agricultural animal commodity organizations and scores of other organizations to help provide the USDA with the information, expertise and support it needs to perform its vital work.

Our nation's colleges of veterinary medicine are innovative, responsive institutions dedicated to helping the veterinary medical profession make its greatest possible contribution to animal agriculture and promoting public health and wellbeing. For example, for the past three years we have worked closely with the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) on a series of programs designed to combat the critical public health threat of antimicrobial resistance. *Addressing Antibiotic Resistance: A Report from the Joint APLU-AAVMC Task Force on Antibiotic Resistance in production Agriculture* provides a comprehensive framework by which our powerful research universities can help our nation address and resolve this problem.

The Honorable George Ervin "Sonny" Perdue III

April 25, 2017

Page 2

We are working closely with USDA personnel on detection, diagnostic and containment programs designed to address the threat posed by pathogenic avian influenza and other existing and emergent infectious disease threats. Work underway on our campuses is also creating advancements in nutrition, reproduction, immunology, parasitology and many other areas that promote agricultural productivity and assist the USDA in its efforts to feed and foster the health of all Americans and promote the nation's economic wellbeing.

We look forward to building upon the very successful relationship we have had with the USDA for many decades, and wish you every success as you provide the USDA with the outstanding leadership that is so vitally important for the future well-being of the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Andrew T. Maccabe, DVM, MPH, JD  
Executive Director

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