

Murray State University Board of Regents Resolution

Hutson School of Agriculture, School of Veterinary Medicine Proposal

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky currently does not have a School of Veterinary Medicine and spent \$5.4 million during Fiscal Year 2022-23 and \$5.6 million in Fiscal Year 2023-24 to fund a total of 168 veterinary slots for Kentucky students with out-of-state universities; and

WHEREAS, in the United States there are only 32 veterinary colleges accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and, based on statistics collected by the AVMA, only approximately 86,000 veterinarians are currently practicing in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the United States and Kentucky currently do not have a sufficient number of veterinarians to meet the growing needs of agricultural, public health and large and small animal owners; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that there are 86,300 veterinarians in the United States and this occupation is expected to grow by over 19% by 2031, producing a needed employment change of 16,800 veterinarians for a total of 103,100. Furthermore, the BLS reports a total of 122,800 veterinarian technologists/technicians are working today and the field is expected to grow by 20% by 2031 to 146,900; and

WHEREAS, per the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), Colleges/Schools of Veterinary Medicine accept approximately 4,500 new, first-year students each year from a pool of over 10,000 applicants. Approximately 70 students from Kentucky are accepted each year to out-of-state veterinary schools. Currently, there are 38 seats at Auburn University and four seats at Tuskegee University for Kentucky residents; and

FURTHERMORE, per the AAVMC, for the 2021-22 school year, "A total of 10,834 qualified applications [were] received by colleges and schools throughout the system. That represents a 5.5% increase over last year's cycle, when a total of 10,273 applicants applied for admission to the class that matriculated this year." Over the past several years, the number of applications has grown about six to seven percent year over year."

Per the AAVMC, "Total DVM student enrollment at the U.S. College of Veterinary Medicine is 14,503.

On average, applicants apply to four to five colleges of veterinary medicine per cycle. The national applicant to first year seat ratio is 2.4 and is calculated using the number of unique applicants in the pool, by the total number of seats offered across institutions. The total number of applicants to the Class of 2026 was 10,834." The number of first-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine students accepted from Kentucky was approximately 70.

WHEREAS, the Hutson School of Agriculture has the estimated largest pre-veterinary medicine/veterinary technology enrollment of any university in Kentucky, with over 425 enrolled students for fall 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Hutson School of Agriculture's Pre-Veterinary/Veterinary Technology programs have been AVMA-accredited since 1986, one of only three fully-accredited programs in the state of Kentucky. The programs have a unique curriculum instructed in the health care of cattle, horses, pigs, dogs, cats, laboratory animals and exotics. The curriculum is designed for students to gain acceptance into a veterinary school or prepare to take the VTNE to be a licensed Veterinary Technician; and

WHEREAS, the Hutson School of Agriculture is home to the A. Carman Animal Health Technology Center, located on Murray State's West Farm in Calloway County, and is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and supplies to prepare students for a career in the field of veterinary medicine, including multiple laboratories, pharmacy, surgery suite and the Animal Health program, is a very active and strong academic area at Murray State University where students are provided with a great foundation that will

help prepare them for entering the workforce upon graduation. With any of the career routes students decide to pursue, coursework is designed to provide valuable hands-on applications, in addition to the didactic teaching; and

WHEREAS, the Breathitt Veterinary Center (BVC) at Murray State University, under the direction of the Hutson School of Agriculture, is a nationally preeminent animal disease diagnostic laboratory dedicated to protecting the invaluable assets of Kentucky's equine, livestock and poultry industries and is housed in Christian County, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, the BVC is the only Level I Laboratory Status designated by the USDA National Animal Health Laboratory (NAHLN) system and one of only 60 laboratories in the United States and one of only 23 with Level I status; and

WHEREAS, the Breathitt Veterinary Center is fully accredited by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) for all species and would serve as an important teaching/clinical laboratory for a school of veterinary medicine; and

WHEREAS, Calloway County and Christian County are both conveniently located in the heart of Kentucky's agricultural industry, where a rapid increase in livestock farming, poultry producers etc. are being realized; and


WHEREAS, in 1973 the Murray State University Board of Regents unanimously passed a Resolution to strongly recommend that a School of Veterinary Medicine be established at Murray State University and in fifty years no progress by the Commonwealth of Kentucky has been made toward establishing a school; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Murray State University Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, create a Task Force to begin a feasibility study with the purpose of examining the statewide shortage of veterinarians with a special emphasis on large animal veterinarians in the Commonwealth and to work toward the development of a School of Veterinary Medicine at Murray State University in order to address this important endeavor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Murray State University will work with the General Assembly, Governor; Commissioner of Agriculture; Council on Postsecondary Education; Kentucky's federal congressional delegation and state, local and federal agencies, among others, in order to seek all available financial support through state appropriations and state and federal grants, coupled with raising private and other University funding, in order to build a School of Veterinary Medicine at Murray State University.


Leon Owens – Chair, Board of Regents


Virginia Gray – Vice Chair, Board of Regents


Robert L. Jackson – President, Murray State University

Committee Action: Approved, Academic Excellence and Scholarly Activities Committee.

Board Action: Approved.