



CANADIAN VETERINARY
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

September 7, 2021

The Honourable Erin O'Toole, MP
Leader of the Conservative Party
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Email: Erin.OToole@parl.gc.ca

Dear Mr. O'Toole:

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) is the national and international voice for Canada's more than 13,000 veterinarians. Its membership comprises Canada's authoritative expertise on veterinary science, animal health and welfare, and public health. Veterinarians provide a critical function in Canadian society in the assurance of food security and safety, animal health, and public health. Veterinary oversight underpins the ability of Canada to trade in animals and animal products and thereby supports the well-being of the Canadian agricultural sector which is critical to the Canadian economy. CVMA members include licensed veterinarians working in all of Canada's provinces and territories as private general practitioners, specialists, researchers, educators, and public servants. In addition, more than 9,000 registered veterinary technologists and technicians are affiliated with the CVMA.

The CVMA remains a leading advocate for animal health and welfare in Canada and works closely with federal agencies, and other stakeholder organizations to address matters of One Health which respects the interrelationship between animal, human and environmental health. Our work is based in science and driven by evidence. CVMA has provided support to various multistakeholder initiatives including the National Farm Animal Care Council, The National Farm Animal Health and Welfare Council, Animal Health Canada, the Animal Violence Link Coalition and to the Parliamentary Committee that reviewed the recent changes to the Criminal Code on bestiality and animal fighting, among many others.

Of significant concern to the profession currently, is the maintenance of sufficient veterinary capacity to serve animals and society. As demonstrated by several recent studies, Canada is now experiencing a significant shortage of veterinarians and veterinary technicians. This situation is not expected to improve in the coming years without some changes to our current system. This current veterinary workforce crisis is having a direct impact on Canadians, the majority of whom own pets as well as on Canadian livestock and poultry producers.

The CVMA welcomes the current discussion regarding animal welfare issues as it underscores the importance of animals to Canadian society. There are several additional issues of great concern to the CVMA and the Canadian public including among the highest priorities, the challenges in adapting to uncertainties brought about by

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climate change and its impact on agriculture. Veterinarians and government urgently need to work together to provide leadership and address these issues that of immense importance to the well-being of all Canadians.

On behalf of the CVMA, I invite you to contact me or the CVMA's CEO, Mr. Jost am Rhyn (jamrhyn@cvma-acmv.org) so that we can support you in exploring solutions to current challenges to animal health and welfare, and public and ecosystem health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kwantes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Louis Kwantes
President, Canadian Veterinary Medical Association