

Submitter: Barbara Kahl
On Behalf Of: A better solution
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1539

February 22, 2026

?The Honorable Ken Helm, Co-Chair
The Honorable Mark Owens, Co-Chair
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

?RE: Formal Request for Legislative Action – Creating the Oregon Rural Veterinary Incentive Program (OR-RVIP)

?Dear Chair Helm, Chair Owens, and Members of the Committee,

?While the discussion surrounding SB 1539 A highlights a very real challenge—the shortage of large-animal veterinarians in rural Oregon—the proposed solution of deregulating invasive medical procedures is a biological and regulatory risk our state cannot afford.

?Instead of lowering the standard of care, I am formally requesting that this Committee develop a Rural Veterinary Incentive Program (RVIP) modeled after the successful Texas HB 1259.

?In Texas, the RVIP has successfully stabilized the rural agricultural economy by incentivizing medical expertise rather than authorizing medical shortcuts. I propose an Oregon model with the following pillars:

?Strategic Loan Repayment:

Provide up to \$180,000 in educational loan forgiveness (\$45,000 per year) for licensed DVMs who commit to four years of practice in a designated "Large-Animal Shortage County."

?Protection of Biosecurity:

By placing DVMs in frontier counties, the state ensures that the "early warning system" for reportable diseases like Trichomoniasis and H5N1 remains active.

?Federal Regulatory Compliance:

This program ensures that Oregon ranchers maintain a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR), which is federally required by the DEA and FDA for the administration of essential livestock medications.

?Practice Sustainability:

Keeping "bread and butter" services (like pregnancy diagnostics) within the local veterinary practice ensures that these clinics remain financially viable to handle 24/7 emergencies, such as difficult calvings or surgeries.

?The Expected Outcome:

In Texas, these incentives led to a significant increase in DVM applicants for rural slots, providing ranchers with the professional support they need while maintaining the highest biosecurity standards in the country.

?Oregon should not be in the business of devaluing the veterinary profession. We should be in the business of recruiting the best medical minds to support our ranchers and dairy producers. I invite you to work with the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) and stakeholders like myself to draft a program that truly solves the problem.

?I look forward to discussing this proactive solution during my testimony.

?Respectfully,

?Dr Barbara J Kahl, DVM
EquiSport Farm and Veterinary Service
Oregon Cattle Owner