

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 13, 2024

Dr. Bob Jackson, President
218 Wells Hall
Murray State University
Murray, KY 42071

Dear Dr. Jackson:

Thank you for your recent update regarding the Murray State University School of Veterinary Medicine proposal, as well as the feasibility study examining both this issue and the state of large animal agriculture in Kentucky.

The feasibility study indicates a large animal veterinarian shortage across our state, particularly throughout rural Kentucky. It is concerning that in Kentucky, there are only 54 veterinarians dedicated to full-time care of large animals, with an approximate shortage of 5,000 veterinarians nationally to meet this demand.

This downward trend of large animal veterinarians has become so alarming that recently the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture released a call for applicants to fill the void in rural veterinarians in Kentucky following the request of Dr. Katherine Flynn, State Veterinarian with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

One obvious solution to this growing problem is for more students to go into the practice of veterinary medicine. It is unfortunate however that Kentucky still does not have a veterinary school and that our students have no other option but to leave the state. I agree with you, Congressman Comer and others throughout our state that now is the time for Kentucky to become a top destination for students seeking a degree in veterinary medicine.

Therefore, I fully support Murray State University in your efforts to develop an accredited School of Veterinary Medicine to aid in the large animal veterinarian shortage and assist the animal agriculture economy of Kentucky.

Please let me know how our office can continue to assist you with this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Senator Rand Paul
United States Senate