

USAHA News Flash, January 2, 2008

**CALL TO ACTION
ANIMAL HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS**

**PREPARE TO
CONTACT SENATORS AND HOUSE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!!**

The U.S. Senate passes 2007 Farm Bill
which includes
The Veterinary Medicine Workforce Grant Program - Section 11014
The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment - Section 7003

In mid December the Senate passed the 2007 Farm Bill which includes the Veterinary Medicine Workforce Grant Program - Section 11014 and the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment - Section 7003. The House passed its version of the Farm Bill a few months ago which did not include either of those two sections.

When Congress reconvenes in mid January a joint Conference Committee will be established to work out the differences between the House and Senate 2007 Farm Bill versions. It is important for a message of support to be heard before Congress reconvenes because Congressional staffers are already working on a compromise bill.

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) strongly supports Farm Bill Sections 11045 and 7003 with 2007 Resolutions Numbers 31 and 34 (www.usaha.org 2007 Resolutions) passed during the 111th Annual Meeting in Reno. In order for the nation to address the shortage of veterinarians, particularly veterinary laboratory diagnosticians and food animal practitioners, and veterinarians trained in agriculture biosecurity the Veterinary Workforce Grant Program and the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment language must be included in the final 2007 Farm Bill.

Increasing the number of trained veterinary professionals in these areas will bolster efforts to protect the food supply and mitigate the effects of disease outbreaks. As an animal health stakeholder you need to let your members of the House and Senate know how essential these two sections of the Farm Bill are to maintain food safety standards, promote public health, protect our citizens from zoonotic disease and provide safeguards against pandemics.

A grassroots contact to the appropriate people in Congressional offices is essential to maintain the Senate wording in the final version of the Farm Bill. Please join us in taking action to ensure that this important veterinary animal health legislation is included in the 2007 Farm Bill.

Upcoming USAHA "News Flashes" will provide specific contact information and talking points.