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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 27      APPROVED**

**SOURCE:                      COMMITTEE ON ONE HEALTH**

**SUBJECT MATTER:            Increased Fiscal Year 2019 Funding for the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services Oral Rabies Vaccination Program**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS), National Rabies Management Program (NRMP) has demonstrated through the strategic implementation of cooperative oral rabies vaccination (ORV) programs targeting wildlife to be cost-effective, while continuing to reduce rabies exposure and transmission among wildlife, livestock, pets and people. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) feels the most effective strategy to implement large scale rabies control efforts is at the source in animal (i.e., vector) populations. ORV programs are designed to immunize target wildlife species by increasing the percentage of rabies-immune animals within vaccination zones, resulting in the reduction of rabies cases, prevention of viral spread, and eventual rabies elimination.

In early 2016, WS with federal, state, academic, and international experts developed a comprehensive strategy to implement Phase 2, elimination of raccoon rabies variant in the Eastern United States. WS also developed and initiated an Enhanced Rabies Surveillance Program with state cooperation throughout the Northeast, Atlantic, and adjacent Mid-West and Southern States to enhance early detection of rabies cases or translocation of animals with rabies. This resulted in detection of two raccoons with raccoon rabies variant west of the Virginia immune barrier in 2017 and immediate contingency baiting strategy by WS and the state to eliminate danger of spread to a new area.

Successful programs in Texas continue with rabies elimination in gray foxes, as well as ongoing studies on rabies control methodology in skunks and maintaining a protective immune barrier along the Mexican border to keep the United States free of coyote (canine) rabies and protect Texas from gray fox rabies reentry. The requested funding will allow USDA to:

- Fully implement and continue the enhanced rabies surveillance program.
- Implement contingency action in response to rabid animals in sensitive areas.
- Continue Phase 1 as outlined in the U.S. National Plan for Wildlife Rabies Management that maintains existing operational programs (immune zones) to control rabies in wildlife populations.
- Continue the investigation of novel and US-licensed vaccines and baits.
- Continue studies related to rabies control in skunks.
- Initiate Phase 2 of the national plan to eliminate raccoon rabies variant in the U.S.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association requests the 117th Congress to appropriate a minimum of \$30 million for program management and contingency actions at the state level in the Fiscal Year 2019 budget line item for the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, National Rabies Management Program.