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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17 APPROVED**

**SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON ONE HEALTH**

**SUBJECT MATTER:** Increased Fiscal Year 2022 Funding for the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services National Rabies Management 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 that strategic implementation of cooperative oral rabies vaccination (ORV) programs targeting wildlife is cost-effective in reducing rabies transmission to protect human and animal health and reduces the cost of living with rabies. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) determined that the most effective strategy to control terrestrial rabies targets the sources of infection (i.e., wildlife vector populations) with landscape scale control efforts. ORV programs are designed to immunize target wildlife species to increase the percentage of rabies-immune animals within vaccination zones, resulting in the reduction of rabies cases, prevention of viral spread (Phase 1 goal of the NRMP), and eventual raccoon rabies variant elimination (Phase 2 goal of the NRMP).

A comprehensive raccoon rabies management strategy has been cooperatively developed with federal, state, provincial and local partners for the elimination of the raccoon rabies variant in the United States (US) and Canada. In 2020, the NRMP and cooperators distributed more than 9 million ORV baits, including more than 8.2 million in the eastern United States to combat raccoon rabies in 17 states and more than 1 million in Texas to prevent the reemergence of canine rabies in coyotes and grey foxes along the border with Mexico. The total area baited in 2020 exceeded 62,000 square miles. In 2019, 20 miles of the ORV zone, equating to 2,324 square miles, was removed along the border with Canada in northern New York, Vermont and New Hampshire. In 2020, an additional 20 miles of the ORV zone, equating to 496 square miles, was removed along the border with Canada and northern New York. Additionally, 4,012 square miles of ORV zone was removed from Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia and Kentucky because raccoon rabies was eliminated from those areas. As a result, baits were shifted into raccoon rabies enzootic areas of Maine, New York and Alabama and reclassified as 1,322 square miles of new area under management. To date, there have been no new NRMP initiated contingency actions in 2020.

A minimum annual appropriation of \$33 million will allow USDA to accomplish the following:

- Continue the enhanced rabies surveillance program, allowing USDA, APHIS, WS biologists to continue conducting between 5,000-7,000 field rabies test each year – 8% of all rabies testing in the US.
- Implement contingency actions in response to rabid animals in sensitive areas.
- Continue Phase 1 of the NRMP, to maintain existing ORV programs to control rabies and prevent spread in wildlife populations.
- Continue the evaluation of novel and US-licensed rabies vaccines and baits.
- Continue studies related to rabies control in skunks, mongoose, and vampire bats

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- Initiate and enhance the operations of Phase 2 of the NRMP to eliminate the raccoon rabies variant in the US.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association requests the 117th United States Congress to appropriate a minimum of \$33 million for the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, National Rabies Management Program.