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**RESOLUTION NUMBER: 22      APPROVED**

**SOURCE:                      JOINT COMMITTEE ON AQUACULTURE**

**SUBJECT MATTER:          National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) applauds the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) for working with the National Aquaculture Association to develop the new National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards (NAHP&S) which incorporates and operationalizes as a critical component the Comprehensive Aquaculture Health Program Standards. A strong national plan protects all aquatic animal health and provides a national framework for consistent inspection and testing of aquatic animals cultured in the United States, supports international trade and private and public aquaculture, and protects natural resources. The effectiveness and success of NAHP&S requires the cooperation of the aquaculture farming community and state, tribal and federal entities.

**RESOLUTION:**

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) to engage other federal agencies, states, and tribes at the highest levels to implement the National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards and integrate the Comprehensive Aquaculture Health Program Standards into their regulations and production practices to meet or exceed foreign, national, state, and tribal regulatory requirements for aquatic animal health.

USAHA requests the 118th United States Congress to appropriate a minimum of \$11.4 million for the USDA-APHIS-VS Aquaculture Program, as presented in the VS 5-year Aquaculture Business Plan.

**INTERIM RESPONSE:**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and appreciates the opportunity to respond. APHIS released the National Aquaculture Health Plan and Standards (NAHP&S) 2021-2023 on July 1, 2021. APHIS initiated a virtual plan that includes presentations, webinars, discussions, and other platforms for in-person and virtual events to continue collaborations with our partners throughout 2022. NAHP&S is a voluntary, non-regulatory, and unfunded effort. APHIS continues to await the final fiscal year 2022 appropriation for the Aquatic Animal Health funding line.