



UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Resolution

114th Annual Meeting ~ November 11-17, 2010
Minneapolis, MN

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 10 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT MATTER: INCREASED FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON
CAUSES OF ZOO NOTIC DISEASES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In February 2010, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the selection of Kansas State University and Texas A&M University as co-leads for a DHS Center of Excellence for Zoonotic and Animal Diseases. However, the original funding of \$30 million over 6 years was cut to \$21 million, with Kansas State receiving approximately \$2 million per year for six years and Texas A&M receiving approximately \$1.5 million per year for six years. The funding for Texas A&M was to support the continuing work of the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD), while the funding for Kansas State University was to initiate a new Center of Excellence for Emerging and Zoonotic Animal Diseases (CEEZAD). Working together these Centers of Excellence are now in the process of establishing research and educational programs with some 30 institutions and collaborators, with Year 1 Work Plans already agreed by DHS.

Because of the extensive expansion of these programs, further funding is essential to sustain the four major research areas: (1) development of vaccines to counter animal diseases with potentially catastrophic public health and economic implications, such as Rift Valley fever, West Nile virus, ebola, foot-and-mouth disease and influenza in swine, horses and birds; (2) development of rapid diagnostic methods to detect these diseases; (3) epidemiology, modeling and simulation of the spread and impact of such diseases, as well as decision-support tools to help DHS and its partners manage potential outbreaks; and (4) educational programs to increase understanding of why more than 60 percent of all human diseases originate as animal diseases.

In May 2009, in testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security, Dr. Tara O'Toole, subsequently appointed DHS Under Secretary for Science and Technology, stressed as one of her priorities to "increase the portion of the S&T budget devoted to basic science and innovative research to seek radical, innovative solutions to particularly difficult problems of high importance." Although the United States Department of Health and Human Services has recently announced that \$480 million will become available in 2011 to establish several Centers of Excellence for Advanced Development and Manufacturing, this significant funding will be of relevance primarily to human vaccine development after the identification of a potential pandemic, rather than the prevention of zoonotic diseases. Therefore, it is essential to significantly increase funding for veterinary research and education in order to investigate and, if possible, eradicate the causes of zoonotic diseases.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges Congress to appropriate \$2 million per year for FY2011 - FY2015, providing an additional \$1 million per year to the Center of Excellence for Emerging and Animal Diseases led by Kansas State University and \$1 million per year to the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense

led by Texas A&M University, thereby restoring cuts made in February 2010. USAHA requests the United States Department of Homeland Security, Science and Technology Directorate to strengthen this program for protecting the United States from emerging animal diseases.