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March 6, 2026

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Tangipa, Vice Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Alvarez, Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: FY 2026-27 Budget Request for the UC Davis DVM-SERVE Veterinary Education Program

Dear Chair Gabriel, Vice Chair Tangipa, and Chair Alvarez,

I respectfully request \$1 million in ongoing funding to support the launch and implementation of the UC Davis Weill School of Veterinary Medicine DVM-SERVE program (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine – Serving Every Region through Veterinary Education). This investment will help address California's veterinarian shortage while strengthening protections for the state's human, animal, and public health.

California faces a growing veterinary workforce shortage that impacts agricultural communities, animal welfare systems, and public health infrastructure. Veterinary medicine plays a critical role in food safety, zoonotic disease monitoring, emergency preparedness, and the treatment of companion and livestock animals. National projections estimate that 40,000 additional veterinarians will be needed in the United States by 2030, underscoring the urgency of expanding training opportunities.

As California's only public veterinary school—and the #1 ranked veterinary school in the nation—UC Davis is uniquely positioned to help meet this workforce need. The DVM-SERVE program will recruit and train students who are committed to serving communities with limited access to veterinary care, particularly in rural and underserved regions of the state.

Modeled after the successful UC Programs in Medical Education (UC PRIME), the DVM-SERVE initiative will combine veterinary education with targeted pathway programs designed to attract students from communities experiencing veterinary workforce shortages. At full enrollment, the program will support a cohort of 20 new veterinary medicine students each year at UC Davis, expanding California's capacity to train veterinarians dedicated to serving local communities.

Students will be recruited through pathway partnerships with UC Merced and California State University, Fresno, with plans to expand partnerships to UC Riverside and California State University, San Bernardino. Over time, the program intends to develop additional pathways with institutions in Northern California, including Cal Poly Humboldt and CSU Chico, helping create opportunities for students from rural communities to pursue veterinary careers.

The DVM-SERVE program will also incorporate mentorship, leadership development, and public health training into the traditional Doctor of Veterinary Medicine curriculum. Students will receive cohort-based support and faculty mentorship throughout the program, preparing them for careers in fields such as livestock health, shelter medicine, accessible veterinary care, and One Health initiatives that connect human, animal, and environmental health.

Therefore, I respectfully request \$1 million in ongoing General Fund support in the FY 2026–27 budget to launch and sustain the UC Davis DVM-SERVE program. This investment will expand veterinary education opportunities, strengthen the state's veterinary workforce pipeline, and help ensure that California communities—particularly rural and underserved regions—have access to the veterinary care necessary to protect animal health, agricultural productivity, and public safety.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you require additional information or would like to discuss this proposal further, please contact Andrew Nickens in my office at (916) 319-2011.

Sincerely,



HEATHER HADWICK

Assemblymember, District 1