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To the Members of UCAP

Regarding the proposed Termination of the Veterinary Technology Undergraduate Program from the College of Veterinary Medicine

From: Janver D. Krehbiel, DVM, PhD., Professor Emeritus, CVM/MSU

I am a retired faculty member having served the College of Veterinary Medicine for 42 years. However, the comments I share with you are from a national perspective as a member of the executive board of the American Veterinary Medical Association. In addition, I serve as a liaison member of the Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities, the national accrediting body for Veterinary Technicians.

First, I think it is important that you understand that there is an urgent need for veterinary technicians through out the veterinary profession across the entire United States. Highly trained technicians are much in demand, particularly in multi-person practices and the larger practices in large metropolitan cities. Veterinary technicians are key members of veterinary health care teams that provide extensive and sophisticated services. The education and technical training of these important paraprofessionals is critical to the health care of animals.

There are two flagship veterinary technician programs in the United States that all other programs look up to and try to emulate because of there excellence and pioneering history in the evolution of veterinary technician education. These programs are a part of the colleges of veterinary medicine at MSU and Purdue University.

The MSU program was the first program to be accredited, one of the leaders in cross collaboration with community colleges and among the first to establish a baccalaureate undergraduate degree program in veterinary technology. Over the years the quality of this program is reflected in successive years of 100% pass rates on the National Board Examination, high demand for MSU graduates of the program and individuals who are leaders in the profession.

Over the years students and faculty in the professional veterinary program recognized the skills of veterinary technicians and the enhanced level of care provided by the integration of veterinary students and tech students in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. This “team health care” delivery strengthened the clinical education provided to both groups of students and better prepared them for successful careers when they graduated. The experience of working together as students gave them a decided advantage in adapting to their respective roles as they took jobs in private veterinary practices. MSU technicians have become the choice hires because of their excellent training and their ability to quickly adapt to “team health care” in treating animals with a variety of health problems. This “team” concept is best-understood and learned when students (veterinary and tech students) work together in repetitive educational experiences over the entire course of their academic experience. The program at MSU is unique and should be continued for the following reasons:

- It has available an excellent baccalaureate degree option
- The educational experience is provided in a veterinary college
- Technician students are taught along side veterinary students learning, early on, the importance of “team health care delivery”
- The program serves as a national role model for all other technician programs