

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2206

To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a competitive grant program to build capacity in veterinary medical education and expand the workforce of veterinarians engaged in public health practice and biomedical research.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 9, 2005

Mr. PICKERING introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a competitive grant program to build capacity in veterinary medical education and expand the workforce of veterinarians engaged in public health practice and biomedical research.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Veterinary Workforce  
5       Expansion Act of 2005”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) Veterinary medicine is an integral and in-  
2           dispensable component of the Nation’s public health  
3           system. Veterinarians protect human health by pre-  
4           venting and controlling infectious diseases, ensuring  
5           the safety and security of the nation’s food supply,  
6           promoting healthy environments, and providing  
7           health care for animals.

8           (2) Veterinarians are essential for early detec-  
9           tion and response to unusual disease events that  
10          could be linked to newly emerging infectious dis-  
11          eases, such as monkeypox, SARS, and West Nile  
12          Virus, or other biothreat agents of concern.

13          (3) There is a need to build national capacity  
14          in research and training in the prevention, surveil-  
15          lance, diagnosis, and control of newly emerging and  
16          re-emerging infectious diseases.

17          (4) Veterinarians are uniquely qualified to ad-  
18          dress these high priority public health issues because  
19          of their extensive professional training in basic bio-  
20          medical sciences, population medicine, and broad,  
21          multi-species, comparative medical approach to dis-  
22          ease prevention and control.

23          (5) There is a shortage of veterinarians working  
24          in public health practice. As used in the preceding  
25          sentence, the term “public health practice” includes

1       bioterrorism and emergency preparedness, environ-  
 2       mental health, food safety and food security, regu-  
 3       latory medicine, diagnostic laboratory medicine, and  
 4       biomedical research.

5           (6) The Bureau of Labor Statistics expects  
 6       there to be 28,000 job openings in the veterinary  
 7       medical profession by 2012 due to growth and net  
 8       replacements, a turnover of nearly 38 percent.

9           (7) The Nation’s veterinary medical colleges do  
 10      not have the capacity to satisfy the current and fu-  
 11      ture demand for veterinarians and veterinary exper-  
 12      tise that is vital to maintain public health prepared-  
 13      ness.

14   **SEC. 3. COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM.**

15      Part E of title VII of the Public Health Service Act  
 16   (42 U.S.C. 294n et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
 17   the following:

18                   **“Subpart 3—Veterinary Medicine**

19   **“SEC. 771. COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.**

20      “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award com-  
 21   petitive grants to eligible entities for the purpose of im-  
 22   proving public health preparedness through increasing the  
 23   number of veterinarians in the workforce.

24      “(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to receive  
 25   a grant under subsection (a), an entity shall—

1 “(1) be—

2 “(A) a public or other nonprofit school of  
3 veterinary medicine, department of comparative  
4 medicine, department of veterinary science,  
5 school of public health, or school of medicine  
6 that offers postgraduate training for veterinar-  
7 ians in a public health practice area as deter-  
8 mined by the Secretary; and

9 “(B) accredited by a recognized body or  
10 bodies approved for such purpose by the De-  
11 partment of Education; and

12 “(2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an  
13 application, at such time, in such manner, and con-  
14 taining such information as the Secretary may re-  
15 quire.

16 “(c) CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Sec-  
17 retary shall establish procedures to ensure that applica-  
18 tions under subsection (b)(2) are rigorously reviewed and  
19 that grants are competitively awarded based on—

20 “(1) the ability of the applicant to increase the  
21 number of veterinarians who are trained in specified  
22 public practice areas as determined by the Secretary;

23 “(2) the ability of the applicant to increase ca-  
24 pacity in research on high priority disease agents; or

1           “(3) any other consideration the Secretary de-  
2           termines necessary.

3           “(d) PREFERENCE.—In awarding grants under sub-  
4           section (a)(1), the Secretary shall give preference to appli-  
5           cants that demonstrate a comprehensive approach by in-  
6           volving more than one school of veterinary medicine, de-  
7           partment of comparative medicine, department of veteri-  
8           nary science, school of public health, or school of medicine  
9           that offers postgraduate training for veterinarians in a  
10          public health practice area as determined by the Secretary.

11          “(e) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts received under a  
12          grant under this subsection shall be used by a grantee to  
13          increase the number of veterinarians in the workforce  
14          through—

15               “(1) paying the costs associated with construc-  
16               tion, the acquisition of equipment, and other capital  
17               costs relating to the expansion of existing schools of  
18               veterinary medicine, departments of comparative  
19               medicine, or departments of veterinary science; or

20               “(2) paying the capital costs associated with the  
21               expansion of academic programs that offer post-  
22               graduate training for veterinarians or concurrent  
23               training for veterinary students in specific areas of  
24               specialization.

1       “(f) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘public  
2 health practice’ includes bioterrorism and emergency pre-  
3 paredness, environmental health, food safety and food se-  
4 curity, regulatory medicine, diagnostic laboratory medi-  
5 cine, and biomedical research.

6       “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

7           “(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be  
8 appropriated to carry out this section, \$300,000,000  
9 for fiscal year 2006, and \$1,264,000,000 for the 9-  
10 fiscal year period beginning with fiscal year 2007.  
11 Amounts appropriated under this subsection shall  
12 remain available until expended.

13           “(2) REQUIREMENT.—Not more than 25 per-  
14 cent of the amount appropriated under paragraph  
15 (1) in each fiscal year shall be made available to  
16 schools of veterinary medicine that were established  
17 after the date of enactment of this section.”.

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