January 6, 2022

Dr. Gord Krebs, DVM

Councillor

Mountainview County, Alberta

**RE: Letter of Support for the Attraction and Retention of Veterinarians to Rural Veterinary Practice Submitted to Government of Alberta.**

To the project review committee,

Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) is a democratic and representative organization that speaks and works on behalf of approximately 18,000 cattle and beef producers from all sectors of primary beef production (seedstock, cow/calf, cattle feeders) and all areas of Alberta. ABP is an organization of producers, led by producers, working for producers. The ABP mission is to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of the beef industry for the benefit of beef producers and all citizens in Alberta.

ABP is a strong supporter of rural Veterinary practice. Rural Veterinary practice provides service to the four common domestic species (Bovine, Equine, Canine, and Feline). This service is critical in sustaining the current Alberta Beef Industry’s substantial economic contribution to the province as the cattle sector generates $13.6 billion in sales, contributing $4 billion to the provincial GDP, including $2.7 billion in labor income. The sector is responsible for generating 55,125 full-time equivalent jobs (including farm level plus backward and forward linked industries). In addition, every job in the sector yields another 2.7 jobs elsewhere in the economy.

Our industry depends on rural Veterinary medicine and practice, to maintain cattle vaccination programs to ensure optimal health of the Alberta herd. Veterinary medicine is a critical component of rural lifestyle and animal health, and as we see the shortage becoming a crisis in rural Alberta, it could potentially lead into increasing bovine diseases and animal welfare issues.

One last added benefit for the beef industry is that attracting and retaining Veterinarians and their families to rural areas increases the population in rural areas of Alberta, in turn, increasing the need to add further amenities resulting in greater social interaction and retention of farmers and cow/calf producers.

We believe the “Attraction and Retention of Veterinarians to Rural Veterinary Practice” has substantial benefits for the Alberta and Canadian beef industry. We are very supportive of graduating additional Veterinarians more apt to reside and practice in rural communities and ABP strongly supports any government action to rectify the Veterinarian shortage across the province with a focus in rural Alberta.

Sincerely,



Brad Dubeau

General Manager