



## **THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

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24 June 2013

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings  
2353 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hastings,

The Wildlife Society thanks you for introducing The Wildlife Veterinarians Employment and Training Act, or The Wildlife VET Act. Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society is a non-profit scientific and educational association of nearly 11,000 professional wildlife biologists and managers, dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship through science and education. Our mission is to represent and serve the professional community of scientists, managers, educators, technicians, planners, and others who work actively to study, manage, and conserve wildlife and habitats worldwide.

The Wildlife VET Act is important legislation that aims to expand the workforce of veterinarians specialized in the care and conservation of wild animals and their ecosystems, and to develop educational programs focused on wildlife and zoological veterinary medicine. Wildlife veterinarians are essential in preventing, detecting, and responding to dangerous diseases in wild animals, and wildlife diseases expertise and resources are critical to protecting both human and animal life.

We appreciate the three tiered strategy outlined in the Wildlife VET Act. The holistic approach aimed at job creation through grants awarded to wildlife and veterinary institutions, debt repayment and reduction for wildlife veterinary students, and curriculum enhancement, fosters the professional growth and development of wildlife veterinary professionals throughout their career.

The Wildlife Society recognizes the importance of this Act, and understands the significant role of wildlife diseases in natural systems, their potential adverse effects on wildlife populations and ecosystems, and their implications for human and domestic animal health. Ensuring that the professional workforce is prepared to address these issues is critical. The Wildlife Society fully supports The Wildlife VET Act and thanks you for considering the views of wildlife professionals.

Sincerely,

Winifred B. Kessler  
President