

January 24, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your letter of January 4 on critical workforce issues affecting the veterinary profession. We welcomed the opportunity to speak with several of those signing the letter at VMX, but on behalf of the AVMA, we wanted to respond formally and extend our appreciation for sharing your thoughtful – and thought-provoking – insights into the challenges we face.

The voices of so many high-level and respected leaders of our profession, joining together in search of strategic solutions and offering additional support for our veterinary community, inspire us. We are completely committed to working collaboratively with you on long-term solutions that ensure veterinary practices can continue to provide high-quality care for our patients and excellent service for our clients, as well as [more immediate steps](#) to deal with stress and prevent additional burnout.

Since the pandemic first arrived on our shores, we have been focused on mitigating its negative impacts on veterinarians, their staffs, patients, and clients, and ensuring the veterinary community remains strong and well-served by its national association. Every day, guided by our members' experiences, we seek new and better ways to help our profession cope with an array of current challenges and future needs. Listening and learning from the insights offered by multiple stakeholders is vital as we grapple with some truly unprecedented and historic challenges. And, we want and need to work collaboratively across the profession with the AAVMC, NAVTA, our state and allied veterinary associations, industry leaders like you, and other key partners to navigate the path forward.

I'm sure many of you saw Dr. Bob Lester's [column](#) in the December issue of *Today's Veterinary Business*. We are attaching our response to his column, which is due to be published shortly. In that response, we provide more detail about our efforts around many of the key issues raised in your letter. For example, important studies and modeling efforts are underway that will add to our understanding of workforce needs in the post-pandemic world. We also are working to drive more effective utilization of our great veterinary technicians, as they are critical to both present and long-term solutions. We will continue to provide resources for all veterinary support staff.

Thank you again for sharing your insights. We are confident that, together, we'll work our way through our current challenges successfully and emerge an even stronger profession.

Sincerely,

José Arce, DVM
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "José Arce".

Janet D. Donlin, DVM, CAE
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet D. Donlin".

Attachment: Lester Response