

## U. S. Poultry & Egg Association Objects to Changes to the American Veterinary Medical Association Animal Welfare Committee

Animal welfare is a critically important issue for our members and we continually strive to produce safe, quality poultry products at an affordable cost for our customers and consumers that utilize the best management practices available for humanely rearing, transporting, and slaughtering birds. Because of this, we support the elevation of animal welfare to the division level within the American Veterinary Medical Association, but oppose the dissolution of the Animal Welfare Committee and replacing it with an Animal Welfare Advisory Committee *“appointed on the basis of their broad expertise in the science of animal welfare, with the understanding that they are to be visionary thinkers who are not representing an animal specific allied organization or animal industry.”*

The committee structure should include a variety of viewpoints and to exclude poultry veterinarians would bring into question its legitimacy. We believe this new committee structure will deprive poultry industry veterinarians, the most knowledgeable experts on the welfare needs of commercial poultry, of a voice when animal welfare issues are being discussed and AVMA positions are being developed. It is not difficult to foresee the proposed committee coming forward with unrealistic positions on poultry welfare issues that could impact poultry production and processing in a very negative and damaging way. We acknowledge that current progress in improving poultry welfare needs to continue, but we question the wisdom of turning the decision making over to salaried “academics” that may have an animal rights agenda without the understanding or appreciation of the practical and economic aspects of the issues in food animal production.

We urge the AVMA to reverse this decision and to reinstate the allied food animal veterinarian-based committee structure that has proven to be very effective in the past.

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