
Golden Valley Veterinary Clinic

January 10, 2022

Re: Testimony in support of HB 1030 – Skilled Workforce Student Loan Repayment & Scholarships

I am submitting testimony in support of the Skilled Workforce Student Loan repayment program, North Dakota Career Builders.

I am the Practice Manager for Golden Valley Veterinary Clinic based in Park River, North Dakota. In 2022, we built a new mixed-animal veterinary clinic in Park River to house our growing practice. In addition to needing more space, we also needed to hire more highly training employees to serve our growing client base.

We have used the Career Builders Loan Repayment program to help us hire Licensed Veterinary Technicians (LVTs). We currently have one LVT enrolled in the program, and two more LVTs completing the paperwork to apply for loan repayments. All three technicians graduated from the NDSU Veterinary Technician program with significant student debt. They also were interested in staying in North Dakota. This loan repayment program really gave our business a benefit other out-of-state companies were not offering.

Licensed Veterinary Technicians are critical to the success of our veterinary practice. LVTs must complete a two- or four-year degree. They also go through a formal licensure program. These technical professionals do every type of skilled nursing for animals, including dental cleanings, surgery monitoring and post-surgical recovery, blood draws, hospitalized patient care, large and small animal restraint, x-rays, medication administration, fecal and other microscope slide analysis, and client education. These are highly trained and sought-after professionals.

Like many other businesses in the area, we struggle to attract highly qualified, trained technical specialists to our rural community. There is a national shortage of Licensed Veterinary Technicians and Veterinarians. And many potential candidates have large student loan balances. The Career Builders program helps us offer a competitive benefit program to potential Licensed Veterinary Technicians.

We also appreciate the loan repayment happening over three years. This really helps us retain employees we have worked hard to recruit and hire. It is our hope that after three years, these employees have established roots in our community, which will keep them here even longer.

The Career Builders Loan Repayment Program has undoubtedly helped us recruit and retain highly qualified Licensed Veterinary Technicians. I appreciate the opportunity to share this testimony in support of the Skilled Workforce Student Loan Repayment program with your committee and I hope that you will continue to fund this critical program.

Respectfully submitted,
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