



312 N B St • Washington, KS  
Office: 785 325 2391  
Fax: 785 325 2585  
washvetclinic@gmail.com  
www.washingtonveterinaryclinic.net

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TO: House Committee on Agriculture Representative Rahjes, Chair  
FROM: Dr. Garrett Stewart, Washington, KS  
RE: Testimony on HB 2605 relating to Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas  
DATE: February 15, 2022

Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony before this committee in support of HB 2605 relating to the Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas (VTPRK). My name is Dr. Garrett Stewart. I am a practice owner/veterinarian from Washington, KS and alum from the Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas.

From 2005 to 2006 as a pre veterinary student at Kansas State University, I had the distinct opportunity to help establish the Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas (VTPRK) that was later signed into law. The program authorized the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine to enter into agreements with up to five, first-year veterinary students who would be eligible for student loan forgiveness in exchange for practicing veterinary medicine in a rural Kansas community. The VTPRK was designed to reduce the “brain drain” in Kansas by incentivizing graduates to remain in the state.

The program has proven to be successful over the past 15 years serving over 80 recipients. 94% of the recipients are still practicing in an eligible community today.

- Impact rural economies with quality, caring, professionals
- Foreign Animal Disease/Disaster preparedness
- Business management
- Civic responsibilities and opportunities
- Long term commitment

I urge the committee to support HB 2605. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Thank you for your time,

Garrett R. Stewart, DVM

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