

AVMA Urges Candidates to Support Animal Issues

Veterinary association challenges McCain and Obama to safeguard pets and promote food safety.

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The American Veterinary Medical Association is challenging presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama to integrate into their platforms positions in support of veterinary medicine, food safety, and animal health and well-being.

“Animal and human health are nonpartisan issues, and we call on Senators McCain and Obama to honor America’s citizens by supporting measures to protect them from zoonotic diseases, food safety outbreaks, and animal-related bioterrorism,” said Ron DeHaven, DVM, chief executive officer of the AVMA.

Specifically, the new president will need to advocate measures aimed at increasing the number of veterinarians and recruiting more to serve in rural areas, according to the AVMA.

“Unfortunately, our nation is heading toward a crisis because there are only 85,000 veterinarians to keep all these animals and the humans in contact with them healthy,” Dr. DeHaven said.

The new president must also take strong stances to preserve food safety programs and resources, such as the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank, which are frequently underfunded or at risk of closure, the AVMA said.

In addition, the AVMA noted that top-level politically appointed positions that deal with veterinary, animal, and food safety issues are best served by veterinarians.

The AVMA is a nonprofit association representing more than 76,000 veterinarians working in private and corporate practice, government, industry, academia and uniformed services.