

MARS incorporated

February 22, 2018

The Honorable Steve Southerland
Office of State Senator Southerland
425 5th Avenue North
Cordell Hull Building, Suite 722
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Senator Southerland:

I am writing on behalf of Mars, Incorporated to provide our strong support for Senate Bill 2154, sponsored by Senator Mike Bell and currently pending in the Senate Committee on Energy, Agriculture and Natural Resources, which would establish the credential of Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) to substitute the title of Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT). As you may know, Mars is the world's largest pet food manufacturer, whose leading brands include PEDIGREE®, SHEBA®, NUTRO®, and IAMS®, and is the largest veterinary service provider in the U.S., with over 2,000 BANFIELD®, BLUE PEARL®, VCA® and PET PARTNERS® Pet Hospitals. Mars currently employs over 2,745 Associates in Tennessee, at our US Petcare Headquarters, 2 Petcare Factories, 2 Confectionery Factories, 26 BANFIELD®, VCA®, and BLUE PEARL® Pet Hospitals, and Global Innovation Center.

Mars has partnered with the American Veterinary Medical Association, American Association of Veterinary State Boards, industry and professional veterinary organizations to develop the Veterinary Nursing Initiative, which creates common terminology, policies and procedures to ease the burden on individual states and associations in governing credentials. Currently, veterinary technicians throughout the United States have varying credentialing requirements, titles and scope of practice which can be confusing in the eyes of pet owners. A single title and credential throughout the nation is the next step to improve the level of patient care, align public perceptions of the veterinary nurse and bring clarity to the field of veterinary medicine.

As pet lovers and a pet business, we applaud the efforts of the Veterinary Nurse Initiative to clarify the veterinary system which benefits pet owners, as well as our Associates. We ask you to support this measure as it moves through committee and once it reaches the Senate floor. Further information is available in the attached document. Please do not hesitate to call on us if we can provide any additional information or perspective as debate on this policy continues. on us if we can provide any additional information or perspective as debate on this policy continues.

Very truly yours,



Mark Broadhurst
Director, Public Affairs & Government Relations
Mars, Incorporated
Mark.Broadhurst@effem.com