AAVLD Committee Report
(Note: Please attach any additional pages necessary for the following subtopics and your minutes / narrative)

Government Relations Committee	**December 2015**
Committee	Date
Bruce Akey	Barb Powers
Committee Chair	Co-chair if applicable
Bruce Akey	Barb Powers
Nominees for upcoming chair / co-chair	Nominees for upcoming chair / co-chair

Committee Statement of Purpose:

The government relations committee monitors government activities that affect AAVLD and interact with USDA, FDA and AVMA and the AAVLD/USAHA committee on the NAHLN. The committee may make recommendations regarding federal actions.

Strategy(ies) for Committee Activity Supporting AAVLD Strategic Plan (Please List):
Continue lobbying effort for AAVLD and the NAHLN
Attend government relation meetings in March, including visits to Congress
Respond to the new proposed laboratory approval process (completed)
Continue interaction with and participation in FDA Vet_LIRN
Continue active communications with AVMA and AAC

Items for Review by the Executive Board (Please List):

Continued funding for the lobbying effort

Action Items for the Committee (Please List):

Work with the AAVLD/USAHA committee on the NAHLN to fund raise for the lobbying effort.

Develop, implement and summarize a state by state survey of the importance of the agriculture industry to the state and the assets of the states VDLs

Please provide this form to Jim Kistler, Executive Director. Also attach a copy (word) with the committee report narrative (due two weeks after conclusion of Annual Meeting) The committee reports will be posted on the AAVLD website and available to members. If you have any questions, please email jkistler@aavld.org.

2015 AAVLD Government Relations Committee Minutes
Saturday, October 24, 2015

1. **NVSL update, NON-NAHLN items – Dr. Beverly Schmidt**: Dr. Schmidt announced the new directors of the different sections of the laboratory, which include Dr. Hochstein for Quality Control, Dr. Ostlund as Associate Director, and Dr. Swenson as Diagnostic Virology Lab Director. Over the last year, NVSL has done over 42,000 accessions and run over 400,000 tests. For the high pathogenic avian influenza outbreak response effort, the lab participat~~ion~~ed in confirmatory testing for the NAHLN, helped with sample collection and supplies, did sequencing of viruses, and did kit validations ~~and~~that allowed for ~~new~~rapid licens~~es~~ing of new test kits. Pseudorabies in China was investigated ~~as far as testing~~ and a ~~current~~new PCR, virus isolation and serology test will be ~~taken of~~developed for this new strain. Swine influenza virus surveillance is still ongoing. The lab~~s~~ validated a new PCR test for vesicular stomatitis and deployed it to the NAHLN laboratories. A saltwater system for aquaculture was commissioned to study shrimp diseases. Protocols were verified for detection of MERS in camels. The lab ~~C~~continued work on equine influenza and eastern equine encephalitis virus, includ~~ed~~ing updating antigens. A ring trial for African horse sickness was done. ~~Interactions~~ Collaboration with the CDC regarding brucellosis detection by culture and PCR was completed. The work on tuberculosis included trouble shooting the gamma interferon test and identifi~~ed~~ing faulty kits. In the One Health arena, salmonella in poultry and exotic pets was investigated. A PCR for piroplasmosis validation is ongoing. In the pathology section, scrapie and CWD testing continued, including oversite ~~into~~of and confirmatory testing for the NAHLN laboratories. A ~~C~~cattle fever tick ~~fever~~ Ivermectin trial was completed and testing for fraudulent blood was also done. Identification of parasites also continued. FADDL proficiency test panels were prepared, courses were given, and new projects were begun. International activities included involvement with foot and mouth disease and African swine fever work. ~~They were~~FADDL was approved as a rinderpest

holding facility and worked on th~~at~~e FMD vaccine bank. As far as quality assurance, 83% of the tests have been ISO 17025 accredited and the laboratory is now ISO 9001~~approved at~~certified ~~ISO9001~~.

2. **FDA Vet-LIRN update, Dr. Renate Reimschuessel**. The Vet-LIRN program started in August of 2010 and is now a functioning network comprising 37 laboratories. The mission is to promote human and animal health. In December of 2010, the staff consisted of a director, a support scientist, ~~and~~ a liaison to the Office of Surveillance and Compliance, and a contract chemist. Currently there is another support scientist and another two veterinarians working on investigation and response to consumer reports. The Vet-LIRN awarded 11 cooperative agreements to study salmonella in pets; the data from this study is being prepared for publication. The Vet-LIRN collaborated with six FERN laboratories to test a number of animal feed products for various contaminants, including Listeria and ~~salmonella~~Salmonella. The Vet-LIRN collaborated with three FERN laborator~~y~~ies to optimize a method ~~and~~for testing of pig tissues for triazine contaminants. The Vet-LIRN was awarded a contract to document feed contaminants, including melamine and mycotoxins. The Vet-LIRN has initiated a proficiency testing program which will conduct, on average, three proficiency tests per year. The upcoming test is on ~~s~~Salmonella detection. The Vet-LIRN has a funding program to provide ~~infrastructure~~ surveillance testing for investigations and currently 30 labs have received this funding. The Vet-LIRN has conducted approximately 30-50 case investigations per year, evaluating problems with animal feed or animal drugs. The Vet-LIRN continues to investigate the cause of pet jerky treat-associated illnesses, focusing on cases of Fanconi syndrome. The Vet-LIRN has initiated a new funding program to validate methods ~~in the network~~ for food contamination and animal diagnostic specimens and there are currently 11 funded projects. The Vet-LIRN is currently working with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network to investigate and combat antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

3. **AVMA Update – Gina Luke:** The AVMA has multiple priorities that they work with Congress to try to get funded. There are at least ten issue areas for appropriations that they are responding to and those of significance to the AAVLD include support for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network where AVMA has been a very staunch supporter. Other areas of interest to AAVLD include the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program, the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank, Agriculture Research Service, and the Antimicrobial Resistance Initiative.; mMany other animal health and welfare issues, food-related issues, pharmaceutical-related issues, and research issues are also evaluated by AVMA and more detailed information is available on their website.

4. New Proposed Laboratory Approval Process – Dr. Randall Levings: The USDA is proposing a new laboratory approval process which does not involve NAHLN-related tests or tests performed byfor the National Poultry Improvement Plan. This includes scrapie genotyping, EIA, tuberculosis, Brucellosis, Johne's disease, pseudorabies, and contagious equine metritis, among others. The purpose is to consolidate the approval process into one regulation, which would include application and inspection requirements, acceptable testing procedures, training and proficiency testing, maintaining approvals, and terms of the approval. Comments are welcome from AAVLD; (*these were provided by email following the meeting and before the deadline*).

Formatted: Font: Italic

5. NBAF Update: The ground has been broken for this new facility has broken and it is expected to be up and running in 2020; Plum Island will close in 2023.

6. NIFA Update: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture presented their proposed budget for 2016. Areas of interest include the Smith-Lever Formula funds, the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database Program, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, the Veterinary Medical Services Act, and Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program. Of special interest to AAVLD is the Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative, which supports the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, where funding is proposed to remain steady at 6.7 million dollars.