## **Supporting Information**

Infrared photodissociation spectroscopic investigation on VO<sup>+</sup> and NbO<sup>+</sup> hydrolysis Catalyzed by Water Molecules

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The Supporting Information includes 14 pages with 27 figures.

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**Fig. S1.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $VO(H_2O)^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S2.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $VO(H_2O)_2^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S3.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $VO(H_2O)Ar^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S4.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $VO(H_2O)_2Ar^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S5.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $VO(H_2O)Ar_2^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S6.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of VO(H<sub>2</sub>O)Ar<sup>+</sup> in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S7.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of  $VO(H_2O)_2Ar^+$  in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S8.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of  $VO(H_2O)Ar_2^+$  in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S9.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) of  $VO(H_2O)_2Ar^+$ , calculated anharmonic vibrational spectrum (red) and harmonic vibrational spectrum (blue) of V-2A\_3 and V-2B\_2 in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S10.** Potential energy surfaces for the reactions of VO<sup>+</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O  $\rightarrow$  VO(H<sub>2</sub>O)<sup>+</sup> (s-V-1: Singlet State; t-V-1: Triplet State).



Fig. S11. Potential energy surfaces for the reactions of  $VO^+ + 2H_2O \rightarrow V(OH)_2(H_2O)^+$  (s-V-2: Singlet State; t-V-2: Triplet State).



**Fig. S12.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $NbO(H_2O)^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S13.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $NbO(H_2O)_2^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S14.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of NbO( $H_2O$ )Ar<sup>+</sup>. The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S15.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $NbO(H_2O)_2Ar^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S16.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $NbO(H_2O)Ar_2^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S17.** Optimized structures of the minimum-energy isomers of  $NbO(H_2O)_2Ar_2^+$ . The relative energies (with ZPE correction) are given in kcal/mol.



**Fig. S18.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of NbO(H<sub>2</sub>O)Ar<sup>+</sup> in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S19.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of  $NbO(H_2O)_2Ar^+$  in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



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**Fig. S21.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) and simulated vibrational spectra (blue) of  $NbO(H_2O)_2Ar_2^+$  in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S22.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) of NbO(H<sub>2</sub>O)Ar<sup>+</sup>, calculated anharmonic vibrational spectrum (red) and harmonic vibrational spectrum (blue) of Nb-1C\_1 in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S23.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) of NbO( $H_2O$ )Ar<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup>, calculated anharmonic vibrational spectrum (red) and harmonic vibrational spectrum (blue) of Nb-1C\_a in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S24.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) of NbO( $H_2O$ )<sub>2</sub>Ar<sup>+</sup>, calculated anharmonic vibrational spectrum (red) and harmonic vibrational spectrum (blue) of Nb-2A\_2 and Nb-2D\_2 in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S25.** Experimental infrared spectrum (black) of NbO( $H_2O$ )<sub>2</sub> $Ar_2^+$ , calculated anharmonic vibrational spectrum (red) and harmonic vibrational spectrum (blue) of Nb-2A\_a, Nb-2D\_a and Nb-2D\_b in O-H stretching frequency region. The two dashed red lines are corresponding to the symmetric (3657cm<sup>-1</sup>) and asymmetric (3756 cm<sup>-1</sup>) stretches of the isolated water molecule.



**Fig. S26.** Potential energy surfaces for the reactions of NbO<sup>+</sup> + H<sub>2</sub>O  $\rightarrow$  NbO(H<sub>2</sub>O)<sup>+</sup> (s-Nb-1: Singlet State; t-Nb-1: Triplet State).



**Fig. S27.** Potential energy surfaces for the reactions of NbO<sup>+</sup> +  $2H_2O \rightarrow HNb(OH)_3^+$  (s-Nb-2: Singlet State; t-Nb-2: Triplet State).