

**House Bill 2783 A-Engrossed  
Position: Support**

**May 2, 2013**

**Senate Judiciary Committee  
Chair, Sen. Floyd Prozanski**

Dear Chair Prozanski and Committee Members:

When it comes to our canine friends, we can do better. The laws that protect them can be better. Not onerous and not impractical, but better. That's what House Bill 2783 is about: making our laws regarding animals more effective, efficient and better.

This legislation doesn't tell us that we have to socialize our dogs. It doesn't even say we have to like our dogs. But the bill does establish additional – and important – parameters around how we care for our dogs.

- Yes, there are time limits – generous limits, we believe – for how long a dog can be tethered or connected to a running line, pulley or trolley system during the course of a day. These are reasonable limits. In addition, any tether **MUST ALLOW** a dog sufficient freedom to move around and not become entangled on the soft cloth or chain where it can cause harm to the animal. This is also reasonable.
- Any dog that wears a pinch or choke collar **CANNOT** be tethered. This is critically important because a dog, wearing either collar, that hits the end of the tethered line and is jerked back, can injure itself – sometimes seriously, especially when the action is repeated over and over. Many of my veterinary colleagues and I are all too familiar with injuries from these types of collars. Choke chains have resulted in injuries such as a collapsed tracheas, bulging disks in the neck, and vertebrae problems in a dog's back. And either chain can get caught in a fence or another object, causing the dog to be strangled or the chain can dig into the animal's neck, causing abrasions or deep wounds. This change in current law is both sensible and reasonable, too.

**Oregon Veterinary Medical Association**



When this bill was first introduced, we had some reservations. The intentions behind the legislation were good, and we agreed with them in principle. But we were concerned that some of the language was too specific and might be impractical for those out in the field enforcing our animal care standards. We were invited to participate in a working group to discuss the merits of HB 2783, and as a result of this process some of the overly restrictive definitions were changed for the better.

It's important to note that the significant changes to the bill were suggested by the very people who enforce our animal care standards – animal control officers. They and our other law enforcement officers have the most day-to-day field experience with such issues. And they uniformly have said that the provisions under HB 2783 will help them be more effective with their educational and enforcement efforts.

Those of us who already provide good care for our dogs won't be affected by this legislation. But the modest upgrades to our animal welfare laws – as outlined in HB 2783 – give law enforcement officers clearer definitions in which to address the situations they encounter in our communities. It gives them better tools with which to have those important conversations with people who fail to meet, either unintentionally or intentionally, standards of care for animals in our state.

House Bill 2783 is good for Oregonians. But more importantly, it is good for Man's – and Woman's – best friend, the dog.

That is why the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association supports this legislation. And it is why we are asking for your support as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Glenn*

Glenn M. Kolb  
Executive Director