

February 19, 2015

House Bill 2641

Dear Chair Witt, Vice Chairs and Committee Members:

I am here this morning representing the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association. We are a membership-driven organization with approximately 1,000 veterinarians across all regions of the state and who are engaged in pet care to mixed animal practice to food production medicine to research and to regulatory oversight and public health.

As professionals who are dedicated to helping animals, we recognize that the intention of House Bill 2641 is to help with our care of animals. I imagine there aren't many people who would disagree with this basic principle.

We learned of suggested amendments to the bill late yesterday and haven't had sufficient time to fully review them and how they might change our consideration. However, at a quick glance, the proposed amendments clarify a weight size of a live animal, and that is helpful with our principal disagreement with the bill. A couple of other concerns remain, though.

- For example, line 8 stipulates that minimum care must be provided to an animal before it is awarded as a prize. On the surface, this sounds good, but what does it really mean? Veterinarians who examine a patient can only attest to the health and fitness of that animal at that given time – when the dog or cat or horse or cow is before them. They don't know with certainty how that animal was cared for before examining the patient, and they don't have control over how that animal will be cared for afterwards. Yet HB 2641 requires the organizers to have knowledge about the animal's care that a veterinarian likely would not have. This is impractical.
- The bill also allows a recipient up to six months to return an animal awarded or given as a prize or raffle. We don't like this part of the bill because it gives the recipients of an animal as a prize an easy out. When we bring animals into our lives we have an obligation to provide them with essential care – and if we cannot meet this basic

obligation, then we have the responsibility to find the animals a good home. Giving the recipient of an animal the option to return it enables them to shirk this responsibility.

We are willing to work with the proponents of HB 2461 to work out an acceptable bill. We would welcome the opportunity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenn".

Glenn M. Kolb
Executive Director