



Oregon

Veterinary Medical Examining Board

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Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

The Hon. Chris Edwards, Chair

The Hon. Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair

The Hon. Michael Dembrow

The Hon. Floyd Prozanski

The Hon. Chuck Thomsen

Dear Chair Edwards, Vice-Chair Olson and Members of the Committee:

The Veterinary Board is requesting that you approve HB 2474. This bill was developed by a task group comprising representatives of veterinary professional associations, humane societies, and private practice and public health veterinarians. The Board believes this bill addresses obsolete practice ownership rules for the benefit of the profession and improves oversight of veterinary facilities for the benefit of the public.

HB 2474 - Veterinary Facility Registration

Problem: Current rules allow only a licensed veterinarian to own a veterinary practice. The rule is not enforceable against practices held by out-of-state corporations or non-profit boards. It prevents non-veterinarian family members, associates and investors from participating in practice ownership.

Solution: Facility registration with an Oregon-licensed veterinarian designated as facility manager will expand veterinary business ownership and sale options. The Board will be able to repeal an obsolete ownership rule without loss of regulatory oversight for public health and safety.

Problem: Board rules establish minimum health and safety standards for veterinary facilities, but facility inspections are possible only in response to a complaint. Substandard facility conditions put the health of people and pets at risk. Clients rarely see more than the lobby or an exam room at a veterinary clinic. The Board usually learns about unsanitary or unsafe conditions from a clinic employee or ex-employee.

Solution: HB 2474 will allow the Board to join approximately 36 other states that register and inspect veterinary facilities. The bill will require each facility to designate a clinic manager responsible for ensuring that minimum health and safety standards are met. The Board will be able to regularly inspect facilities, as well as continue to respond to complaints about clinic conditions.

On behalf of the Board, I thank you for your consideration and request your support for HB 2474.

Respectfully,

Lori Makinen
Executive Director



How the 2015 Veterinary Board Bills Will Benefit Oregonians

HB 2474 - FACILITY REGISTRATION

✓ The current rule requires the forced sale of the traditional family-owned veterinary practice if the licensed family member dies. HB 2474 will allow the family to retain the business by hiring an Oregon licensed veterinarian.

With facility registration available the Board can repeal its outdated and unenforceable ownership rule.

✓ HB 2474 will increase ownership options to attract a wider range of potential purchasers and investors.

✓ Certified veterinary technicians, practice managers, and other practice staff can aspire to become owners or partners in veterinary practices. This will lead to better staff retention and engagement.

✓ Additional ownership models such as non-profits, partnerships, and cooperatives can help establish and maintain veterinary services in under-served areas and to under-served populations. Examples are low income areas and rural areas where traditional practices may be scarce.

✓ By requiring a licensed facility manager for each practice, medical decisions and facility standards are still under the control of Oregon licensed veterinarians and subject to compliance with the Veterinary Practice Act. The public is still well protected.

✓ Periodic educational inspections of veterinary facilities will help insure minimum standards are being met. Currently, veterinary facilities are not inspected unless there is a specific complaint.

The Board may leverage resources by contracting with other agencies that currently perform routine health facility inspections.