



Senate Committee on Business & General Government

Senate Bill 70 (Support)

Jan. 29, 2019

Dear Chair Riley, Vice Chair Girod, and Committee Members:

Oregon law clearly defines the practice of veterinary medicine. And administrative rules further support this statutory authority, with clearly documented standards of care for licensed individuals as well as specific requirements for veterinary facilities.

686.030 Acts constituting practice of veterinary medicine. A person practices veterinary medicine, surgery or dentistry when the person does any of the following in this state:

- (1) Diagnoses, treats or prognosticates an animal medical problem.
- (2) Prescribes or administers a drug, medicine or treatment for the prevention, cure, amelioration, correction or modification of an animal problem or for euthanasia.
- (3) Induces anesthesia in an animal.
- (4) Performs a surgical or dental operation or procedure upon an animal.
- (5) Performs an embryo transfer or pregnancy, sterility or fertility evaluation.
- (6) Gives an instruction or demonstration regarding the acts described in this section, except as an agent or employee of this state or of the federal government.
- (7) Advertises or represents in any manner, publicly or privately, that the person is willing to do any of the acts described in this section. [Amended by 1987 c.651 §2a]

Statute's original intent was to allow farm, ranch and dairy personnel to provide animal husbandry services. However, existing statutory language appears to be contradictory and can be interpreted to allow "any person" to practice veterinary medicine on any animal without a veterinary license issued by the Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board. To our knowledge, no other medical board in Oregon permits lay people to practice medicine.

Senate Bill 70 clarifies the law's intent and narrows provision of veterinary services to any owner or employee of an animal's owner as well as others who provide services without direct compensation. This is consistent with the overwhelming majority of state veterinary laws and regulations across the United States.

The proposed revision in SB 70 strengthens consumer protection in Oregon. It ensures that those individuals who practice veterinary medicine – other than who also is qualified above – are licensed professionals with oversight by a state licensing board, in contrast with individuals who have not had the education, training and ongoing continuation education of a licensed veterinary practitioner. Non-licensed individuals do not have regulated standards of animal care, nor is it likely that they carry malpractice insurance.

Veterinary medicine is far encompassing, dedicated to preserving and protecting the health and welfare of animals, and includes evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, and prevention of any and all diseases, disorders and conditions that might affect an animal. This occurs under an established Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship. Singular services or procedures performed by lay people on animals do not take into account the animal's overall condition and health – to the risk of the animal and the consumer. And there is no regulatory oversight of such services, thus no State protection of the consuming public.

We appreciate your consideration and ask for your support of SB 70.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Glenn", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Glenn M. Kolb

Executive Director