

Submitter: Rodney Ferry
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1539

February 4, 2026

Senate Bill 1539 – Oppose

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Committee Members,

First, I would like to commend you for listening to some of our concerns. The proposed amendment to have the oversite via the OVMEB instead of the ODA is a big step in the correct direction. If passed this amendment will allow the board that is designed to oversee veterinary medicine to oversee these people. Make no mistake, regardless of who performs this task it is a veterinary procedure. When done via rectal palpation or ultrasound in cattle it is an invasive veterinary procedure.

Secondly, please ignore the testimony in favor that states this needs to be passed so owners can do their own cattle. This exemption already exists and extends to employees and gratuitous service. Since the less invasive blood tests are an easier skill to learn this exemption currently makes pregnancy detection of cattle available anywhere in Oregon. What is not allowed is someone sitting up a business to do this job unless they are a veterinarian. Therefore, you should also ignore the testimony that says this service is not available in rural areas. I currently have a remote herd of about 3,000 mother cows that are being pregnancy tested via the blood test. They are one of the largest cattle producers in the nation and have been doing this for 3 years now with whatever cowboy crew happens to be working there at the time, and this is legal with our current laws.

Another issue I see is the statement for an unlicensed individual. All other certified health care or veterinary personal require a license especially if working unsupervised. Contractors, Hair Dressers, Nail Salons, etc. all require a license. If this is to pass these lay pregnancy testers need to be licensed. The amendment gives oversite to the correct people but without the possibility of removing a license it gives them no means to enforce any rules they put in place. If 1539 is to be considered there should be another amendment to require licensing of these people. I would also suggest they need to work under a veterinarian such as current certified veterinary technicians and equine dentists.

When rural communities are short physicians and have trouble hiring more what do they do? They bring in Physicians Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, and/or more RN's.

These people are licensed and work under the physicians allowing them to get to more patients. This works! Invasive veterinary procedures need to be under a licensed and insured veterinarian. A licensed "Cattle Pregnancy Technician" working under a veterinarian could be a useful tool. An uninsured, unlicensed, unsupervised person performing an invasive veterinary procedure as a business is not a good idea. The Oregon Farm Bureau suggests that in some areas large animal veterinarians need help. If so, put these people under the veterinarians and give them help while still protecting industry. Do you see one veterinarian in favor of 1539 as written? No, so obviously this is not the help veterinarians want, which pretty well destroys the Oregon Farm Bureau's reasoning.

The foremost experts on this procedure are veterinarians. I have spoken with some OCA members who regret not consulting a veterinarian to get more education on this topic prior to their referendum to support. Even without this knowledge was not a landslide in the OCA. Many did not understand or consider the challenges veterinarians expect to have trying to recruit large animal veterinarians to our state or trying to convince our ranch kids to go to vet school. This bill is not the answer and could well create a severe shortage of cattle veterinarians that will be hard to overcome even if reversed. If you are to pass this; please require a license from the OVMEB and the individuals to work under a licensed veterinarian and/or limit them to the non-invasive blood tests. Please vote no on SB 1539 as proposed.

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