

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

Please vote yes on SB 1539. It is essential for the cattle industry in Eastern Oregon. Malheur and Harney counties have consistently been in the top 20 counties in the United States for cow numbers. They would be closer to the bottom 20 percent of the state in number of veterinarians. There are many people that have taken training on preg testing cattle as well as Artificially Inseminating cattle that have done a lot more of this in the past than veterinarians. We need these qualified people available for us to hire them for pregging our cattle.

Where we have our ranch, it is within an hour and a half drive from Ontario and Baker City. We have utilized veterinarians for our cattle needs from both directions. Now, as fees go up, and small animal veterinary care becomes more lucrative than large animal care, the closest vet that is willing to come on farm visits for cattle is past Baker City. I have contacted four vet clinics we have used in the past and they all say to haul any cattle that need their services to them. They can't afford to be gone from their office that far. This has come about as the older vets retired and younger ones took their places. It is also influenced by how expensive vet school has become and their working under huge school debts.

These vets do not want to come preg test 20 or 200 or 500 head this far out.

Preg testing cattle accurately depends upon doing lots of preg testing either by palpitation or by using the ultrasound. Vets are busy with dogs, cats, other pets and livestock, animal accidents and emergencies, surgeries, and disease diagnostics in their clinics.

The option of not preg testing can be catastrophic. There are diseases causing abortions that would not be discovered until after the calving time came and went, months after the fact. You would not discover cattle with uterine issues. You would not have an accurate time frame on when the cattle were going to calve since some could be early or late.

For the future the rural areas could utilize people with vet assistant training similar to the PAs for the minor vet stuff that are willing to make rural calls that can pass you on to more specialized care when needed.

For now let us utilize our rural people that have gone to the trouble to become trained in pregnancy testing and artificial insemination that are willing to perform these services. Vote yes on SB1539.