

Submitter: Gail Colbern

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1539

Good day, I am a veterinarian here in Oregon and am very concerned about this proposed legislation. It is bad for the cows and even worse for the people of the state of Oregon. It could very well prove to be a public health nightmare.

- Lay persons are not trained to recognize the various zoonotic reproductive diseases that could be unleashed if veterinarians are removed from the process.

- Rectal palpation and ultrasound are invasive procedures that have the potential of injuring cows and can even result in their demise.

- The lack of rural large animal veterinarians is being touted as the reason for this bill. But passing this would remove a major role for large animal veterinarians and would result in even fewer veterinarians to be available. In the event of an outbreak of reproductive diseases, 75% of which are zoonotic and capable of making people sick, there will be no boots on the ground to deal with the outbreak. Oregon Department of Agriculture is primarily tasked with dealing with these potential outbreaks but they depend on their local veterinarians to get any samples collected, analyzed and cattle identified and treated.

- The Veterinarian-Client-Patient-Relationship is a primary tenant to providing for the health of animals, as well as public health, here in Oregon and throughout the United States. The VCPR is required for providing medical care to all animals. The VCPR requires veterinarians to physically observe the animals and their environment at least once a year and working cows is a perfect opportunity for the veterinarian to provide health and nutrition updates to maintain good herd health.

- There is no current training program to satisfy the requirements of this bill and it would require additional funding to the Oregon Department of Agriculture to develop and maintain a training and monitoring program. Rectal palpation is defined as the practice of veterinary medicine and the Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board is the proper agency for monitoring this process.

- Lay persons would not be able to get liability insurance and would thus place ranchers/cattlepersons at risk of loss.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to vote no on SB1539. My primary concern is in the realm of public health. Brucella and leptospirosis are nothing we want to get into our beef or dairy streams and lay persons are simply not equipped to keep them out. Thank you for your consideration.

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