



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board

800 NE Oregon St., Suite 407

Portland, OR 97232

Phone: 971-673-0224

Fax: 971-673-0226

OVMEB.info@oregon.gov

www.oregon.gov/ovmeb

February 24, 2026

Representative Ken Helm, Co-Chair
Representative Mark Owens, Co-Chair
House Committee on Agriculture,
Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
900 Court Street NE, H-178
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 1539

Dear Co-Chairs:

The Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board (OVMEB) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding SB 1539. The Board's statutory mission is to protect the public and Oregon's animals by regulating the practice of veterinary medicine. OVMEB licenses veterinarians, certifies veterinary technicians and euthanasia technicians, registers veterinary facilities, and may adopt rules to support the licensees, support the veterinary community, and safeguard animals in Oregon.

We understand that SB 1539 seeks to address workforce and operational needs within Oregon's livestock industry, particularly around pregnancy verification in cattle. The bill assigns rulemaking authority to OVMEB, and the Board is prepared to undertake that responsibility if directed by the Legislature. We are committed to working collaboratively with producers, licensees, and stakeholders to implement any statutory changes in a manner that supports Oregon's agricultural community.

The fiscal impact statement previously submitted for this bill reflects minimal cost for the rulemaking process itself. However, we respectfully note that the fiscal impact of implementing and administering the program created by SB 1539 is unknown. The scope and scale of the program — including the number of individuals seeking approval, the training and oversight required, and the enforcement needs — cannot be determined at this time. These variables may more significantly influence the Board's long-term resource needs beginning in the 27/29 budget biennium.

While we maintain our position as “neutral” on the Bill, the Board acknowledges several concerns that have been consistently raised by our licensees and by the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA). The most significant issue arises from the bill’s exemption from ORS 686.020 for individuals approved to perform pregnancy testing. ORS 686.020 is the foundational statute that prohibits unlicensed individuals from practicing veterinary medicine, performing surgery or dentistry. It also prevents individuals from representing themselves as qualified to diagnose or treat animal diseases.

By exempting individuals “trained to preg test” from ORS 686.020, the bill appears to remove these core protections. Without them, the Board’s ability to regulate or discipline individuals who exceed the intended scope of pregnancy verification may be significantly limited. This raises concerns regarding animal welfare, consumer protection, and the integrity of veterinary practice in Oregon. Alternative to exempting these individuals, with additional authority, OVMEB could certify individuals similar to Euthanasia technicians, utilizing an existing pathway.

If SB 1539 moves forward, OVMEB will work diligently to develop rules that protect animal health, support herd health needs, and provide clarity for producers, veterinarians, and approved individuals. However, rulemaking alone may not resolve concerns previously raised about the complications created by exempting individuals from ORS 686.020.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony and remain committed to working with the Legislature and stakeholders to support rural Oregon and preserve essential safeguards for Oregon’s animals and the public.

Respectfully submitted,



Peter J. Burns
Executive Director

Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board
800 NE Oregon Street Suite 407, Portland, OR 97232
971.673.0223 | FAX 971.673.0226