

CVMA TESTIMONY: CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENT FOR VETERINARIANS

Representative Ritter, Senator Harris and members of the Public Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and submit written testimony, in favor of **RB6678**. My name is Dr. Arnold Goldman and I am Co-Chair of the CVMA's Government Affairs Committee. We represent the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), which includes as its members, over 95% of all Connecticut licensed veterinarians. Our Association strongly supports **RB6678**.

Sections 10 and 11 of **RB6678** would extend to veterinarians a requirement they obtain regular continuing education appropriate to their professional duties and employment. The CVMA supports such a requirement.

On a national basis, forty-six states require continuing education to renew a veterinarian's license to practice and we believe it is right that they do so. Currently Connecticut and just three other states, Hawaii, Michigan and New York are in a minority, which do not require continuing education for veterinarians. Further, veterinarians are unique among Connecticut's highly educated healing professions, in that they are not required, in any formal way, to seek regular, continuing education.

We do not believe a systemic problem currently exists with substandard veterinary care related to inadequate knowledge or skill. We do believe the public deserves and should be able to expect, the quality assurance inherent in the regular pursuit and assimilation of new knowledge and professional skills. Further, in light of the highly sophisticated and rapidly evolving state of veterinary medical practice today, we believe such a requirement is necessary and appropriate, commensurate with the responsibility and privilege conferred upon us by the public.

Indeed, the same premise underpins the continuing education requirements of physicians and dentists, and other health professions, and we believe it should similarly do so with the veterinary profession. Our reputations depend on consumer confidence and too, the public perceives we should strive to remain current. We believe it is well past time to align that expectation with reality, and require mandatory continuing education for veterinarians.

This requirement will ensure a minimum level of competence among veterinarians and serves notice to every licensee that in return for the privilege of a license to practice veterinary medicine in this state, the expectation of society is the maintenance of current knowledge and proficiency. **RB6678** will accomplish this goal, while incurring no cost to taxpayers or to government. We urge you to join us in support of **RB6678**. Thank you.

Very respectfully,

Eva Ceranowicz DVM
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Government Affairs Committee Co-Chairs
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