

# Executive Officer's Report

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*The mission of the Veterinary Medical Board is to protect consumers and animals through development and maintenance of professional standards, licensing of veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians, and registered veterinary premises and diligent enforcement of the California Veterinary Medicine Practice Act.*

The Legislative year is in full swing and trips down to the Capitol are more frequent as we go down to testify on the various bills. The number of vacancies in the office and hiring freeze that perpetuates the vacancies makes it difficult to handle these special work projects and trips along with regular day to day workload. We are waiting to hear about whether or not our request for hiring exemptions has been approved and hope to hear something soon.

**Senate Bill 697 - Unlicensed Activity.** The issue of unlicensed activity is a major topic of discussion these days for all licensing boards because of the impact on consumers and their animals. Over the last two years, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) has actively supported increased enforcement for both licensees and illegal unlicensed activity, but it is a complex issue. SB 697 was changed to a two year bill to allow time for discussion and to clarify the fact that the bill is not changing existing law, but is clarifying the Board's existing authority over unlicensed activities.

SB 697 (Negrete-McLeod) includes language that clarifies the Board's authority over illegal unlicensed activity in general and it includes provisions from SB 1111, a bill that was in last year's legislative session that was sponsored by the DCA. SB 1111 was designed to make specific the enforcement authority for all healing arts boards for both licensed and unlicensed activity.

**Anesthesia Free Dentistry.** The use of a dental scaler by an unlicensed or unregistered person not under supervision of a California licensed veterinarian has been illegal since May 1990 when California Code of Regulations, Section 2037 became effective in law. In 2004, that law was tested in a court of law in a citation appeal case that went to an administrative hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). Although the citation was ultimately dismissed, within the decision, the ALJ stated that the dental scaler was not at all similar to the items listed in 2037. An information article relative to SB 697 and Frequently Asked Question with Responses were developed in response to letters received on this issue and both documents are now posted on the web.

**License plate bill – Assembly Bill 610 (Solario).** AB 610 decreases the number of license plate applications that is required before the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will initiate a specialty license plate. Currently the number is 7,500 applications. The bill decreases that number to 2,500 and allows private donations to achieve the total start up costs, currently at \$400,000. The bill was heard in the Senate Transportation Committee on Tuesday, July 5, 2011, and issues with the lower threshold for the number of plates required for startup surfaced. The bill may become a two year bill with an urgency clause to be heard again next January or February and hopefully passed.

**Registered Veterinary Technician Committee (RVTC).** The RVTC met on June 14, 2011, and spent most of their time working on draft regulations for the RVT student exemption and title protection language. The June meeting was the last meeting of the RVTC and Dr. Tom Kendall, Board Member Liaison to the RVTC, will give the final RVTC report with action items to the Board at its July meeting.

**Multidisciplinary Committee.** The MDC finalized the recommended amendments to the minimum standards of practice at its June 15, 2011, meeting. The proposed language for changes to the minimum standards of practice are in the Board's binder for review and consideration. The next priority project for the MDC is to update the Board's citation and fine regulatory language and to develop guidelines for issuing the citation and setting fine thresholds.

**Department of Consumer Affairs.** The DCA Training Office will be facilitating the Board Strategic Planning Meeting in October so representatives from DCA will be coming to the July Board meeting to give the Board an overview on what to expect in October.

**American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB).** The Board's request for a change in the bylaws to have designated public and RVT board members on the AAVSB Board of Governors was not supported by the Bylaws Committee or the Board of Directors, but the request will go before the Delegates for a vote. A copy of the letter is included in the Board binders for discussion.

The Board is also reviewing the standards for provider and course approval through the AAVSB's RACE. RACE is the Board's designated approval body for continuing education required for license renewal and the Board must conduct audits occasionally to insure that the RACE standards are consistent with the Board's regulations.

**California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) Meeting.** Due to the current restricted travel, Linda Starr and I will not be able to attend the meeting of the CVMA Board of Governors and House of Delegates on Thursday, June 30, 2011, in Anaheim. There will be some representation at the meeting. DCA Director, Brian Stiger, is attending as a guest and key note speaker at the PAC luncheon.