



## MEMORANDUM

<b>DATE</b>	January 15, 2026
<b>TO</b>	California Veterinary Medical Board (Board)
<b>FROM</b>	Justin Sotelo, Policy Specialist
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Agenda Item 6. Update, Discussion, and Possible Action on 2025-2026 Legislation Impacting the Board, DCA, and/or the Veterinary Profession</b>

Legislation is amended, statuses are updated, and analyses are added frequently; thus, hyperlinks, identified in blue, underlined text, are provided throughout this document to ensure Board members and the public have access to the most up-to-date information. The information below was based on legislation, statuses, and analyses (if any) publicly available on January 14, 2026.

### A. Priority Legislation for Board Consideration

**1. Assembly Bill (AB) 1458 (Wallis, 2025) Physical Therapy and Veterinary Medicine: Animal Physical Therapy**  
**Board Position: Oppose**

**Status:** Assembly Business and Professions Committee

**Analysis:** None

Hearing Date: None

**Summary:** This bill would authorize a licensed physical therapist who meets specified education, training, and experience requirements to provide animal physical therapy (APT), as specified. The bill would require the physical therapist to notify the Physical Therapy Board of California (PTBC) of their practice of APT, as prescribed. The bill would require the APT to be provided under either of two sets of circumstances involving a licensed veterinarian who has established a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with the animal.

The first set of circumstances would be under the direct supervision of the veterinarian at a premises registered with the Board. The second set of circumstances would be pursuant to a referral from the veterinarian, would require the physical therapist to provide a specified written notification to the owner of the animal patient, and would require the physical therapist to hold an active practice agreement with the licensed veterinarian.

The bill would require the physical therapist to provide a written copy of that active practice agreement to the Board or PTBC upon request. The bill would authorize physical therapy aides to aid the physical therapist in performing APT, as specified.

The bill would make any physical therapist providing APT solely liable for delegated APT tasks performed pursuant to a referral from a licensed veterinarian or by a person under the direct supervision of the physical therapist. The bill would specify that a veterinarian who issues an order for treatment for APT is not liable for the APT provided pursuant to that order by the physical therapist or by an aide or other assistant supervised by the physical therapist.

The bill would make certain disciplinary actions against a Physical Therapy Practice Act licensee by the Board conclusive evidence of unprofessional conduct by the licensee under the Physical Therapy Practice Act. The bill would require the PTBC to immediately notify the Board of any disciplinary actions or practice restrictions placed on the license of a physical therapist who has notified the PTBC of their practice of APT.

The bill would prohibit a physical therapist whose license is suspended, revoked, or otherwise disciplined by the PTBC from providing APT. The bill would specify that these provisions, among other things, do not authorize an unlicensed person to practice APT, except for physical therapy aides as described above.

The bill would make a failure to comply with specified supervision requirements imposed by the bill or any regulation adopted pursuant to these provisions unprofessional conduct and grounds for disciplinary action, as prescribed. The bill would prohibit a physical therapist providing APT from supervising or delegating any APT, except as specified. The bill would specify that these provisions, among other things, do not authorize a physical therapist to provide any other services or perform any acts which constitute veterinary medicine.

The bill would define various terms for the purposes of the above-described provisions.

**Board Concerns:** The Board opposed this bill due to various concerns, including the lack of an education or clinical training verification requirement prior to licensed physical therapist practice of APT on an animal patient. The Board also had concerns with the bill's creation of new definitions of direct and indirect supervision that would conflict with the existing definitions of those terms and the disparate approaches between this bill and the proposed

practice by licensed chiropractors on animal patients in Senate Bill 687, discussed further below.

An additional concern is that the bill would authorize APT to be performed at a location that is not registered as a veterinary premises with the Board; as such, it appears human and animal patients could be treated in the same room without the location conforming to any minimum standards of cleanliness or patient safety. The full Board discussion on this bill can be viewed [here](#).

While drafting the official position letter, Board staff was notified this bill was being held for the year and would likely undergo significant revisions if it were to move forward in 2026. As such, no official position letter was submitted.

**2. Senate Bill (SB) [687](#) (Ochoa Bogh, 2025) Chiropractors: Animal Chiropractic Practitioners**  
**Board Position: Oppose**

**Status:** Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee

**Analysis:** None

Hearing Date: None

**Summary:** This bill would prohibit a chiropractor who is not under the supervision of a veterinarian from practicing animal chiropractic, as defined, without being registered as an animal chiropractic practitioner by the State Board of Chiropractic Examiners (SBCE) and satisfying certain requirements, including holding a certificate from one of specified entities, unless otherwise specified by the SBCE. The bill would specify that the SBCE shall establish requirements for registration and would establish conditions and requirements for practicing animal chiropractic.

The bill would require an animal chiropractic practitioner to comply with regulations of the SBCE applicable to chiropractors, would authorize the SBCE to adopt regulations necessary to implement the bill's provisions, and would require the SBCE, if adopting specified regulations, to consult with the Board, including regulations regarding standards of medicine or care for an animal. The bill would make an animal chiropractic practitioner exempt from the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act.

**Board Concerns:** The Board previously expressed concerns related to chiropractor's familiarity with animal conditions and the lack of any veterinarian supervision. The Board also believed the existing provisions allowing animal chiropractors to provide services under direct supervision of a veterinarian is sufficient. While this bill offered more consumer protection than AB 1458 by requiring a board oversight and certification, the underlying

concerns regarding supervision paralleled AB 1458. The Board also had concerns with the disparate approaches between this bill and the proposed practice by licensed physical therapists on animal patients in AB 1458. The full discussion can be viewed [here](#).

While drafting the official position letter, Board staff was notified this bill was being held for the year and would likely undergo significant revisions if it were to move forward in 2026. As such, no official position letter was submitted.

## **B. Legislative Proposal to Amend BPC Sections 130, 801, 802, 4839.5, and 4840.6, and Repeal BPC Sections 4840.9, 4841.4, and 4842 to Make Minor and Technical Revisions Regarding Veterinary Medicine**

Every year, the Senate Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development (Senate BP&ED Committee) introduces a committee bill to provide an opportunity for BPC cleanup, conforming changes, and other necessary updates to the laws within the Committee's jurisdiction.

The legislative proposal seeks to make minor technical revisions regarding veterinary medicine (Attachment 3). The proposed statutory amendments and rationale are as follows:

- **BPC Section 130:** Would add "California" to "Veterinary Medical Board"
- **BPC Section 801:** Would strikes subdivision (g)(2)
  - **Rationale:** BPC section 801 outlines reporting requirements for professional liability insurers to report malpractice settlements over a certain monetary threshold. Subdivision (d) of that section requires insurers of licensed veterinarians to report to the Board any settlement or arbitration amount over \$10,000, as specified.

BPC section 802 outlines reporting requirements for individuals *without* professional liability insurance.

In 2017, the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) Sunset bill amended BPC section 801 to add new subdivision (h) that defines "insurer" to include "the licensee, or his or her counsel, if the licensee does not possess professional liability insurance." The 2017 BRN Sunset [Background Paper](#) discussed the issue of needing to increase the BRN licensee insurer settlement reporting threshold amount from \$3,000 to \$10,000 because the prior settlement amount, set in 1975, was outdated, and BRN was getting many low-dollar reports that did not represent sufficiently egregious violations to warrant investigation. The Senate BP&ED Committee analysis similarly includes this discussion. There is no discussion of the need or justification to add the new definition for "insurer."

However, when the 2017 amendment to BPC section 801 added the new definition for “insurer” (includes licensee or their counsel who does not possess professional liability insurance) as subdivision (h)(2), it created a conflict with BPC section 802, which also establishes reporting requirements for licensees who do not hold professional liability insurance.

The Board’s Executive Officer contacted the BRN to inquire why the definition was added, but current BRN staff and legal counsel did not know why it was added. Similarly, Senate BP&ED Committee staff did not recall the rationale, and it wasn’t discussed in the Senate BP&ED Committee analysis.

In December 2025, the Board’s Executive Officer raised the issue during the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Legislative Roundtable, a quarterly meeting for all DCA boards and bureaus. There was a consensus that BPC section 801, subdivision (h)(2), did not make sense, was unnecessary due to the uninsured licensee reporting requirements under BPC section 802, and should be struck.

- **BPC Section 802:** No longer recommending amending this section through this Senate BP&ED Committee bill. The cleanup required is too substantive for the Senate BP&ED Committee bill and should be vetted by all DCA healing arts boards.
- **BPC Section 4839.5:** Would update the cross-reference to Section “4839” with “4841.5”
  - **Rationale:** All RVT registration requirements were moved from BPC section 4839 to BPC section 4841.5 by AB 1502 (Berman, Chapter 195, Statutes of 2025).
- **BPC Section 4840.6:** Would strike “, or his or her employing veterinarian or agency authorized under Section 4840.9,”
  - **Rationale:** Section 4840.9 is recommended to be repealed, discussed further below. Veterinarians otherwise have liability immunity for emergency treatment pursuant to BPC section [4826.1](#).
- **BPC Section 4840.9: Repeal**
  - **Rationale:** As written, the statute is permissive in that it states RVTs and veterinary assistants “*may* be employed by any veterinarian licensed or authorized to practice in this state or by any governmental agency which employs veterinarians [emphasis added].” The statute further states “the employer must be fully aware of the provisions of this article as stated by regulations adopted by the board pursuant to Section 4836.”

However, RVTs and veterinary assistants can, and often are, employed by unlicensed individuals and corporate entities. BPC sections [4854.1](#) and [4883](#), subdivisions (j) and (t), prohibit unlawful control over RVT veterinary practice and aiding and abetting violations of the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act by unlicensed individuals/premises registration holders. Otherwise, the Board does not have authority to take action against those employers who do not know the RVT and veterinary assistant laws, and it seems unlikely the Board would take action against an RVT or veterinary assistant for their employer's lack of knowledge.

If the Board, through an investigation, determined an RVT or veterinary assistant went outside the scope of practice and/or performed tasks without proper supervision, the Board could take action against the RVT, veterinary assistant, and/or supervisor.

This section was added in 1937 and may have been necessary at that time. However, this section no longer serves any consumer protection need and should be repealed.

- **BPC Section 4841.4: Repeal**
  - **Rationale:** Subdivisions (a) and (b) are covered under BPC section [4836.2](#). Subdivision (c) is no longer necessary, as the Board no longer administers the RVT examination.
- **BPC Section 4842: Repeal**
  - **Rationale:** This section is covered under BPC section [4883](#).

**Action Requested:**

If the Board agrees with Board staff's recommendation, please entertain a motion to submit to the California State Legislature the attached legislative proposal to amend BPC sections 130, 801, 4839.5, and 4840.6, and repeal BPC Sections 4840.9, 4841.4, and 4842.

**C. Other Potential 2026 Legislation**

**1. Continuing Education for Pro-Bono Spay and Neuter Services**

The California Animal Welfare Association (CalAnimals) is seeking feedback on their draft legislative proposal (Attachment 2). Currently, veterinarians are required to complete 36 hours of continuing education (CE) credit for license renewal, and RVTs are required to complete 20 hours of CE for registration renewal.

As part of the 36 hours, a veterinarian may earn up to six hours combined by taking up to six hours of self-study courses or providing up to four hours of

pro bono spay and neuter services, as specified. (BPC, § [4858.1](#), subd. (b)(2).)

Similarly, RVTs may earn up to four hours combined by taking up to four hours of self-study courses or providing up to two hours of animal health care tasks related to spay and neuter services, as specified. (BPC, § [4858.2](#), subd. (b)(2).)

The legislative proposal would reorganize the veterinarian and RVT CE statutes to eliminate the combined six-hour cap for self-study courses and pro bono spay and neuter services. Instead, the legislative proposal would allow a veterinarian to complete up to six hours of self-study courses and up to four hours of spay and neuter services (up to a total of 10 CE hours of the 36 hours required for license renewal).

The legislative proposal would also allow an RVT to complete up to four hours of self-study courses and up to two hours of spay and neuter services (up to a total of six CE hours of the 20 hours required for registration renewal).

In addition, the legislative proposal would strike “pro bono” and add “at no cost to” the listed shelters where spay and neuter services may be performed to qualify for CE credit. These amendments would allow the licensee/registrant to claim CE credit while performing spay and neuter services for which the licensee/registrant could be paid, instead of authorizing spay/neuter CE credit for performing these services for free.

According to CalAnimals, this is intended to make it clear the organization receiving the benefit isn’t charged for the veterinarian’s or RVT’s spay/neuter services. The sponsors are not concerned with veterinarians or RVTs being paid by a third party.

Notably, when these CE sections were amended to allow veterinarians and RVTs to earn CE credit for providing pro bono spay and neuter services, some Board members raised concerns that these services, while noble, did not meet the intent of CE. However, members were less concerned since they were part of the six-hour capped CE credit hours.

With that said, the sponsors believe reorganizing the CE hours to strike the six-hour CE hour cap language and revising the spay and neuter service CE credit from pro bono services to possibly paid services provides more incentive for veterinarians and RVTs to provide the services, as long as the shelter or rescue group were provided the services at no cost.

## **2. Registered Veterinary Technician Scope of Practice**

The California Registered Veterinary Technicians Association (CaRVTA) is seeking feedback on a draft legislative proposal (Attachment 3) that would

establish new provisions for an RVT to expand their scope of practice as a Veterinary Technician Specialist (VTS).

Key points of the legislative proposal include the following:

- **Definition of VTS:** A VTS would be defined as an RVT who holds membership in a specialty organization recognized by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA), the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), or their successors.
- **Requirements for VTS:** The VTS must maintain an active RVT registration and fulfill the requirements of their specialty organization. They also must provide proof of their active VTS membership to the Board upon request.
- **Prohibited Titles:** The bill would prohibit the use of titles like "registered veterinary technician specialist" or similar terms implying VTS status unless the individual is actively recognized as a VTS. It also would reiterate prohibitions on using "nurse" titles in a veterinary context unless explicitly regulated.
- **Scope of Practice for VTS:**
  - **Prohibited Actions:** A VTS would generally be prohibited from performing surgery, diagnosing animal diseases, providing prognoses, and writing prescriptions.
  - **Supervision:** The supervising veterinarian would retain overall control and authority, and their supervision of a VTS must be at least indirect, as defined in California Code of Regulations.
  - **Authorized Actions:** A VTS would be authorized to perform specific minor procedures (like skin biopsies, debridement, placing certain tubes, and percutaneous sampling/injections) under specific conditions, including the existence of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship and the availability of the supervising veterinarian via audio/video communication.
  - **Agent for Sedation/Anesthesia:** A VTS would be authorized to act as an agent for the supervising veterinarian to perform a secondary physical exam and obtain a history for the purpose of inducing anesthesia or sedation for noninvasive imaging, cancer therapies, and minor procedures.
  - **Anesthesia Induction:** A VTS would be authorized to induce and maintain anesthesia for specific purposes, aligning with existing regulations.

- **Specialty-Based Care:** A VTS would be required to provide care within their specialty and based on the skills and knowledge needed for safe patient care, as determined by the supervising veterinarian.
- **Record Keeping:** A VTS would be required to maintain accurate medical history records for animal patients.
- **Compensation:** A VTS would only be able to receive compensation through their employer (clinic, practice, or veterinarian) or for services an RVT can perform without supervision, as specified.
- **Veterinarian Liability:** The supervising veterinarian would remain individually responsible and liable for acts delegated to and performed by the VTS. However, this would not relieve the VTS of responsibility or liability for their own actions or omissions.

In addition, the legislative proposal adds the ability for RVTs, without supervision of a veterinarian, to administer or apply oral, topical, subcutaneous injectable medications, or medical devices, to an animal following a written prescription from a non-supervising veterinarian outside of a registered veterinary premises

Board staff notes there are many technical improvement opportunities throughout the legislative proposal. Those improvements aside, most of the VTS section may be accomplished through regulations by amending California Code of Regulations (CCR) section [2036](#) regarding Animal Health Care Tasks for RVTs. However, the rulemaking process could take two to three years to complete.

The Board has previously expressed its support to expand RVT utilization throughout the veterinary profession, and this proposal seeks to do that. In addition, the Board previously discussed the potential for RVTs to administer medications without Board supervision, but it was determined that would require a legislative change best sponsored by a professional association.

**Attachments:**

1. Legislative Proposal to amend BPC sections 130, 801, 4839.5, and 4840.6, and Repeal BPC Sections 4840.9, 4841.4, and 4842 to Make Minor and Technical Revisions Regarding Veterinary Medicine
2. CalAnimals Legislative Proposal to Amend BPC Sections 4858.1 and 4858.2 Relating to Veterinary Medicine, RN 2602548, dated January 14, 2026
3. CaRVTA Legislative Proposal to Amend BPC Sections 4826.1 and 4840 of, and to add Article 2.2 (commencing with Section 4833) to Chapter 11 of Division 2 of, the BPC, Relating to Healing Arts, RN 2501551, dated January 2, 2025

## CALIFORNIA VETERINARY MEDICAL BOARD

### LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL TO AMEND BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE (BPC) SECTIONS 130, 801, 4839.5, AND 4840.6, AND REPEAL BPC SECTIONS 4840.9, 4841.4, AND 4842 TO MAKE MINOR AND TECHNICAL REVISINGS REGARDING VETERINARY MEDICINE

Additions are shown in single underlined text, and deletions are shown in ~~single strikethrough~~ text.

**130.** (a) Notwithstanding any other law, the term of office of any member of an agency designated in subdivision (b) shall be for a term of four years expiring on June 1.

(b) Subdivision (a) applies to the following boards or committees:

[...]

(8) The California Veterinary Medical Board.

[...]

**801.** (a) Except as provided in Section 801.01 and subdivisions (b), (c), (d), and (e) of this section, every insurer providing professional liability insurance to a person who holds a license, certificate, or similar authority from or under any agency specified in subdivision (a) of Section 800 shall send a complete report to that agency as to any settlement or arbitration award over three thousand dollars (\$3,000) of a claim or action for damages for death or personal injury caused by that person's negligence, error, or omission in practice, or by his or her rendering of unauthorized professional services. The report shall be sent within 30 days after the written settlement agreement has been reduced to writing and signed by all parties thereto or within 30 days after service of the arbitration award on the parties.

(b) Every insurer providing professional liability insurance to a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 4980), Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 4990), or Chapter 16 (commencing with Section 4999.10) shall send a complete report to the Board of Behavioral Sciences as to any settlement or arbitration award over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of a claim or action for damages for death or personal injury caused by that person's negligence, error, or omission in practice, or by his or her rendering of unauthorized professional services. The report shall be sent within 30 days after the written settlement agreement has been reduced to writing and signed by all parties thereto or within 30 days after service of the arbitration award on the parties.

(c) Every insurer providing professional liability insurance to a dentist licensed pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1600) shall send a complete report to the Dental Board of California as to any settlement or arbitration award over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of a claim or action for damages for death or personal injury caused

by that person's negligence, error, or omission in practice, or rendering of unauthorized professional services. The report shall be sent within 30 days after the written settlement agreement has been reduced to writing and signed by all parties thereto or within 30 days after service of the arbitration award on the parties.

(d) Every insurer providing liability insurance to a veterinarian licensed pursuant to Chapter 11 (commencing with Section 4800) shall send a complete report to the Veterinary Medical Board of any settlement or arbitration award over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of a claim or action for damages for death or injury caused by that person's negligence, error, or omission in practice, or rendering of unauthorized professional service. The report shall be sent within 30 days after the written settlement agreement has been reduced to writing and signed by all parties thereto or within 30 days after service of the arbitration award on the parties.

(e) Every insurer providing professional liability insurance to a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 2700) shall send a complete report to the Board of Registered Nursing as to any settlement or arbitration award over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) of a claim or action for damages for death or personal injury caused by that person's negligence, error, or omission in practice, or by his or her rendering of unauthorized professional services. The report shall be sent within 30 days after the written settlement agreement has been reduced to writing and signed by all parties thereto or within 30 days after service of the arbitration award on the parties.

(f) The insurer shall notify the claimant, or if the claimant is represented by counsel, the insurer shall notify the claimant's attorney, that the report required by subdivision (a), (b), or (c) has been sent to the agency. If the attorney has not received this notice within 45 days after the settlement was reduced to writing and signed by all of the parties, the arbitration award was served on the parties, or the date of entry of the civil judgment, the attorney shall make the report to the agency.

(g) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no insurer shall enter into a settlement without the written consent of the insured, except that this prohibition shall not void any settlement entered into without that written consent. The requirement of written consent shall only be waived by both the insured and the insurer.

(h) For purposes of this section, "insurer" means the following:

(1) The insurer providing professional liability insurance to the licensee.

~~(2) The licensee, or his or her counsel, if the licensee does not possess professional liability insurance.~~

~~(32) A state or local governmental agency, including, but not limited to, a joint powers authority, that self-insures the licensee. As used in this paragraph, "state governmental agency" includes, but is not limited to, the University of California.~~

**4839.5.** No person shall use the title "registered veterinary technician" or "veterinary technician," or any other words, letters, or symbols, including, but not limited to, the abbreviation "R.V.T.," with the intent to represent that the person is authorized to act as a registered veterinary technician, unless that person meets the requirements of Section 48394841.5.

**4840.6.** Any registered veterinary technician registered in this state who in good faith renders emergency animal health care at the scene of the emergency, ~~or his or her employing veterinarian or agency authorized under Section 4840.9,~~ shall not be liable for any civil damages as the result of acts or omissions by a registered veterinary technician rendering the emergency care. This section shall not grant immunity from civil damages when the registered veterinary technician is grossly negligent.

**4840.9.** ~~Registered veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants may be employed by any veterinarian licensed or authorized to practice in this state or by any governmental agency which employs veterinarians. However, the employer must be fully aware of the provisions of this article as stated by regulations adopted by the board pursuant to Section 4836.~~

**4841.4 (a)** ~~The board, by means of examination, shall determine the professional qualifications of all applicants who wish to register as veterinary technicians in California. A registration shall not be issued to anyone who has not demonstrated their competency by examination.~~

**(b)** ~~The examination for veterinary technicians shall consist of a national licensing examination.~~

**(c)** ~~For examination purposes, the board may make contractual arrangements on a sole source basis with organizations furnishing examination material as it may deem desirable and shall be exempt from Section 10115 of the Public Contract Code.~~

**4842.** ~~The board may deny a registered veterinary technician application if the applicant has done any of the following:~~

**(a)** ~~Committed any act that would be grounds for the suspension or revocation of registration under this chapter.~~

**(b)** ~~While unregistered, committed, or aided and abetted the commission of, any act for which a certificate of registration is required by this chapter.~~

**(c)** ~~Knowingly made any false statement in the application.~~

**(d)** ~~Been convicted of a crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions and duties of a registered veterinary technician.~~

~~(e) Committed any act that resulted in a revocation by another state of the applicant's license, registration, or other procedure by virtue of which one is licensed or allowed to practice veterinary technology in that state.~~

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An act to amend Sections 4858.1 and 4858.2 of the Business and Professions Code, relating to veterinary medicine.



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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Doctors of veterinary medicine continue to innovate to address the pet overpopulation crisis.

(b) Animal shelters in California support funding to advance education in high-quality, high-volume spay and neuter services to address the pet overpopulation crisis. Animal shelters further support veterinarians who receive continuing education credit for their time spent volunteering to provide spay and neuter services in California's animal shelters.

SEC. 2. Section 4858.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4858.1. (a) The board shall issue renewed veterinarian licenses only to those applicants who have completed a minimum of 36 hours of continuing education in the preceding two years.

(b) Continuing education hours for veterinarians shall be earned as follows:

(1) Attending courses relevant to veterinary medicine and sponsored or cosponsored by any of the following:

(A) The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), its accredited veterinary medical colleges, or its recognized specialty or affiliated allied groups or educational organizations.

(B) State veterinary medical associations or their affiliated associations or educational organizations.

(C) Federal, state, or local government agencies.

(D) Providers accredited, approved, or recognized by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), American Medical Association (AMA), American Dental Association Continuing Education Recognition Program (ADA CERP), or American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB).

(2) A total of 6 hours or fewer of the required 36 hours of continuing education may be earned by doing either of the following, or a combination thereof:

(A)

(2) Up to six hours of the required 36 hours of continuing education may be earned by taking self-study courses, which may include, but are not limited to, reading journals, viewing video recordings, or listening to audio recordings.

(B)

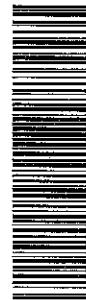
(3) Up to four hours of the required 36 hours of continuing education may be earned by providing pro bono spaying or neutering services for at no cost to a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group in compliance with the following:

(i)

(A) The services shall be performed at a veterinary premises registered with the board pursuant to Section 4853.

(ii)

(B) Proof of completion of continuing education pursuant to this subparagraph shall be documented by the director or administrator of the public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group, with a copy provided to the veterinarian, and



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include the date of performing the spaying and neutering services, the name, address, and telephone number of the entity for which the spaying and neutering services were provided, and the name, address, and veterinary premises registration where the spaying and neutering services were performed.

(3)

(4) A veterinarian who teaches a course specified in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) may receive continuing education credit for the course one time during a renewal period.

(4)

(5) Up to 16 hours of continuing education credit may be earned by participating as an expert in an examination preparation workshop for the national licensing examination.

(5)

(6) Up to 24 hours of continuing education credit may be earned for completing courses in business practice management or licensee mental health and wellness and its impact on the delivery of veterinary services.

(6)

(7) Up to one hour of continuing education credit may be earned by passing the Veterinary Law Examination (VLE).

(7)

(8) Up to two hours of continuing education credit may be earned by attending a board of Veterinary Medicine Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee meeting, as verified by the board.

(c) Providers offering continuing education courses pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b) shall comply with the requirements of Section 4858.3.

(d) For good cause, the board may adopt an order specifying, on a prospective basis, that a course provider authorized pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b) is no longer an acceptable provider.

(e) (1) A licensed veterinarian who renews their license shall complete a minimum of one credit hour of continuing education on the judicious use of medically important antimicrobial drugs every four years as part of their continuing education requirements.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, "medically important antimicrobial drug" means an antimicrobial drug listed in Appendix A of the federal Food and Drug Administration's Guidance for Industry #152, including critically important, highly important, and important antimicrobial drugs, as that appendix may be amended.

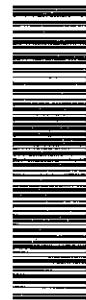
SEC. 3. Section 4858.2 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4858.2. (a) The board shall issue renewed veterinary technician registrations only to those applicants who have completed a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education in the preceding two years.

(b) Continuing education hours for registered veterinary technicians shall be earned as follows:

(1) Attending courses provided by those specified in subparagraphs (A) to (D), inclusive, of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 4858.1 or sponsored or cosponsored by one of the following:

(A) National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) recognized veterinary technician specialty organizations.



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(B) State veterinary technician associations recognized by the secretary of state in that state.

(2) Up to 4 hours of the required 20 hours of continuing education may be earned by doing either of the following, or a combination thereof:

(A)

(2) Up to four hours of the required 20 hours of continuing education may be earned by taking self-study courses, which may include, but are not limited to, reading journals, viewing video recordings, or listening to audio recordings.

(B)

(3) Up to two hours of the required 20 hours of continuing education may be earned by performing ~~pro bono~~ animal health care tasks related to spaying or neutering services ~~for at no cost to a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group~~ in compliance with the following:

(i)

(A) The services shall be performed under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian at a veterinary premises registered with the board pursuant to Section 4853.

(ii)

(B) Proof of completion of continuing education pursuant to this subparagraph shall be documented, with a copy provided to the registered veterinary technician, by the supervising veterinarian and include the date of performance of animal health care tasks, the name, address, and telephone number of the entity for which the animal health care tasks were provided, the name and veterinarian license number of the supervising veterinarian, and the name, address, and veterinary premises registration where the animal health care tasks were performed.

(3)

(4) A registered veterinary technician who teaches a course described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) may receive continuing education credit for the course one time during a renewal period.

(4)

(5) Up to nine hours of continuing education credit may be earned by participating as an expert in an examination preparation workshop for the national licensing examination.

(5)

(6) Up to 13 hours of continuing education credit may be earned for completing courses in business practice management or mental health and wellness and its impact on the delivery of veterinary services.

(6)

(7) Up to one hour of continuing education credit may be earned by passing the Veterinary Law Examination.

(7)

(8) Up to two hours of continuing education credit may be earned by attending a board or Veterinary Medicine Multidisciplinary Advisory Committee meeting, as verified by the board.

(c) Providers offering continuing education courses pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b) shall comply with the requirements of Section 4858.3.



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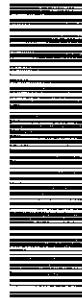
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(d) For good cause, the board may adopt an order specifying, on a prospective basis, that a continuing education source authorized pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of subdivision (b) is no longer an acceptable source.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

Bill No.

as introduced, Lee.

General Subject: License and registration renewal: continuing education.

Existing law, the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act, establishes the California Veterinary Medical Board, until January 1, 2030, within the Department of Consumer Affairs and sets forth its powers and duties relating to the licensure of veterinarians, the registration of veterinarian technicians, and the general regulation of the practice of veterinary medicine.

Existing law requires the board to issue a renewed veterinarian license or renewed veterinary technician registration to an applicant who completes a minimum number of hours of continuing education. Existing law permits a portion of this continuing education to be completed either as self study or by providing pro bono spay or neuter services for specified agencies.

This bill would recast those provisions to, instead, specify that both the self study and the pro bono spay or neuter services may be used to satisfy those requirements.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.



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An act to amend Sections 4826.1 and 4840 of, and to add Article 2.2 (commencing with Section 4833) to Chapter 11 of Division 2 of, the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts.



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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that a national shortage of veterinarians and veterinary team members has made access to animal health care more difficult and costly. That challenge is even greater in rural, production animal farm settings, specialty care centers, shelter-rescue settings, for animals needing in-home care, and in low-income and unhoused populations.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to do all of the following:

(1) Empower veterinarians and their trusted registered veterinary technicians, and registered veterinary technicians with advanced certification as veterinary technician specialists, to expand their scope of practice and allow veterinary technician specialists to practice under modified levels of supervision to increase access to care.

(2) Decrease the burden on both consumers and veterinarians by expanding the scope of practice and changing levels of supervision for qualified professionals.

(3) Maintain California's competitive edge by retaining nonveterinarian professionals within the state and encouraging new professionals to relocate to the state.

SEC. 2. Section 4826.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4826.1. A veterinarian or registered veterinary technician who on his or her their own initiative, at the request of an owner, or at the request of someone other than the owner, renders emergency treatment to a sick or injured animal at the scene of an accident shall not be liable in damages to the owner of that animal in the absence of gross negligence.

SEC. 3. Article 2.2 (commencing with Section 4833) is added to Chapter 11 of Division 2 of the Business and Professions Code, to read:

#### Article 2.2. Veterinary Technician Specialists

4833. For purposes of this article, "veterinary technician specialist" or "VTS" means a registered veterinary technician in the state who holds a membership through a veterinary technician specialty organization recognized by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA), the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), or successor organizations.

4833.1. (a) A VTS shall maintain an active registration in good standing as a registered veterinary technician in the state and fulfill the requirements to maintain active membership as a VTS with the governing veterinary technician specialty organization.

(b) Upon request of the board, a VTS shall submit proof of active membership as a VTS with the governing veterinary technician specialty organization and any other relevant information determined by the board.

4833.2. (a) A person shall not use or assume the title "registered veterinary technician specialist," "advanced practice registered veterinary technician," "advanced practice veterinary technician," "RVTS," "APRVT," "APVT," or use any words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia indicating or implying that the person is a VTS unless the person holds an active membership as a VTS.



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(b) Except as otherwise authorized by Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 2700) or Chapter 6.5 (commencing with Section 2840), a person shall not use or assume the title "nurse," "veterinary nurse," "registered veterinary nurse," "veterinary nurse specialist," "certified veterinary nurse," "certified veterinary nurse specialist," "licensed veterinary nurse," "nurse specialist," "advanced practice veterinary nurse," "advanced practice registered veterinary nurse," "VN," "RVN," "VNS," "CVN," "CVNS," "LVN," "NS," "APVN," "APRVN," or use any words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia indicating or implying that the person is a veterinary nurse, with or without the veterinary descriptor, unless adopted as a type of licensee or regulation within this chapter.

4833.3. (a) (1) Notwithstanding any other law, and except as otherwise provided by this section, a VTS shall not do any of the following:

- (A) Perform surgery.
- (B) Diagnose animal diseases.
- (C) Provide a prognosis.
- (D) Write a prescription for drugs, medicines, or appliances.

(2) The supervising veterinarian retains control of and authority over the care of the animal patient and may limit approved tasks within this section at their discretion.

(3) The degree of supervision by a licensed veterinarian over a VTS shall be consistent with standards of good veterinary medical practices and be no less than indirect supervision as that term is defined in Section 2034 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.

(b) In addition to and with the appropriate change in supervision levels to the animal health care tasks in Section 2036 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, as that regulation is in effect on the date of enactment of this section, a VTS may do the following:

(1) Perform the following minor procedures on an animal patient if a valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship already exists and the supervising veterinarian is readily available by two-way audio or video communication:

- (A) Collect dermal skin biopsies.
- (B) Perform debridement of necrotic soft tissue for the purposes of wound care and management.
- (C) Place abdominal, thoracic, esophagostomy or percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy tubes, or tracheostomy breathing tubes, in an emergency, as defined in Section 4840.5.

(D) Perform percutaneous sampling or injections.

(2) (A) Except as otherwise required by federal law, act as an agent of the supervising veterinarian to perform in person a secondary physical exam and obtain the animal patient's history from the client when feasible for the purpose of inducing anesthesia or sedation that would allow for the order and administration of a Schedule II, III, or IV controlled substance, or xylazine, in a registered veterinary premise for noninvasive imaging, cancer therapies that require sedation or anesthesia, and minor procedures as described under paragraph (1).

(B) The in-person secondary physical exam may be performed either unsupervised, pursuant to the order of the supervising veterinarian, or supervised while on a two-way audio and video synchronous communication with the supervising veterinarian.



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(3) Induce and maintain anesthesia in accordance with Section 2032.4 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations only for noninvasive imaging, cancer therapies that require sedation or anesthesia, and minor procedures as described under paragraph (1).

(4) For purposes of this subdivision, noninvasive imaging includes magnetic resonance imaging, computed tomography scans, positron emission tomography scans, and ultrasounds.

(c) A VTS shall only provide care for animal patients based on their specialty or the skills and knowledge needed to provide safe care of the animal patient, as determined by the supervising veterinarian.

(d) A VTS shall keep accurate records, including the animal patient's medical history.

(e) A VTS shall not receive a fee or other compensation for animal health care services other than the salary or other compensation paid by the veterinary clinic, veterinary practice, or veterinarian by which they are employed, or for what a registered veterinary technician may perform without supervision as set forth in subdivision (e) of Section 4840.

(f) The supervising veterinarian is individually responsible and liable for the acts delegated to and performed by the VTS. This section does not relieve the VTS of any responsibility or liability for any of their own acts or omissions.

SEC. 4. Section 4840 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4840. (a) Registered veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants are approved to perform those animal health care services prescribed by law under the supervision of a veterinarian licensed or authorized to practice in this state.

(b) (1) Registered veterinary technicians may perform animal health care services on those animals impounded by a state, county, city, or city and county agency pursuant to the direct order, written order, or telephonic order of a veterinarian licensed or authorized to practice in this state.

(2) An order established by a veterinarian pursuant to paragraph (1) may include any of the following information:

(A) Time periods by which an impounded animal is required to be assessed at intake and monitored while in the custody of an agency.

(B) Protocols to address the treatment of common medical conditions encountered in impounded animals.

(C) Protocols for controlling infectious and zoonotic diseases and for preventing environmental contamination.

(D) Protocols for controlling the acute pain of an impounded animal.

(E) Communication requirements between the registered veterinary technician and the supervising veterinarian.

(F) Euthanasia criteria for medically related cases.

(c) Registered veterinary technicians may apply for registration from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration that authorizes the direct purchase of sodium pentobarbital for the performance of euthanasia as provided for in paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) of Section 4827 without the supervision or authorization of a licensed veterinarian.

(d) Registered veterinary technicians may act as an agent of the supervising veterinarian in establishing the veterinarian-client-patient relationship for the purposes



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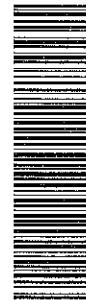
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of administering preventive or prophylactic vaccines or medications for the control or eradication of apparent or anticipated internal or external parasites in accordance with subdivision (b) of Section 4826.7.

(e) Registered veterinary technicians may, without the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, administer or apply oral, topical, subcutaneous injectable medications, or medical devices, to an animal following a written prescription from a nonsupervising veterinarian outside of a registered veterinary premise setting.

SEC. 5. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

Bill No.

as introduced,

General Subject: Veterinary medicine: veterinary technician specialists.

Existing law, the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act, provides for the licensure and regulation of the practice of veterinary medicine by the Veterinary Medical Board. Existing law prohibits any person from practicing veterinary medicine, as defined, without a license. Existing law makes a violation of these provisions a crime.

Existing law, in the absence of gross negligence, prohibits a veterinarian who renders emergency treatment to a sick or injured animal at the scene of an accident from being liable in damages to the owner of the animal, as specified.

This bill would additionally prohibit a registered veterinary technician who renders emergency treatment to a sick or injured animal, as specified, from being liable in damages to the owner of the animal in the absence of gross negligence.

Existing law authorizes a registered veterinary technician to perform limited duties related to the practice of veterinary medicine under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, as specified. Existing law authorizes a registered veterinary technician to act as an agent of a supervising veterinarian for the purpose of establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship to administer preventive or prophylactic vaccines or medications, as specified.

This bill would authorize a registered veterinary technician to administer or apply oral, topical, subcutaneous injectable medications, or medical devices, to an animal without the supervision of a licensed veterinarian, as specified.

This bill would require a veterinary technician specialist (VTS), as defined, to maintain an active registration in good standing as a registered veterinary technician and fulfill the requirements to maintain active membership as a VTS with the governing veterinary technician specialty organization, as described. Upon request of the board, the bill would require a VTS to submit proof of active membership as a VTS and any other relevant information, as specified. The bill would prohibit a person from using specified titles, including "registered veterinary technician specialist" or any other words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia indicating or implying that the person is a VTS unless the person has met prescribed requirements.

This bill would prohibit a VTS from doing certain activities, including writing a prescription for drugs, medicines, or appliances, except as specified, and authorize a VTS to, among other things, perform prescribed minor procedures on an animal patient under specified circumstances, as provided. The bill would require a VTS to only provide care for animal patients based on their specialty or the skills and knowledge needed to provide safe care of the animal patient, as determined by the supervising veterinarian. The bill would require a VTS to keep accurate records, including the animal patient's medical history. The bill would prohibit a VTS from receiving a fee or other compensation for animal health care services other than the salary or other compensation paid by the veterinary clinic, veterinary practice, or veterinarian by



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which they are employed, or for what a registered veterinarian technician may perform without supervision, as specified.

Because the bill would impose new requirements and prohibitions under the Veterinary Medicine Practice Act, the violation of which is a crime, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.



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