



State Legislative Update

March 2022

This issue of the State Legislative Update includes select summaries of bills and regulations tracked by the AVMA's Division of State Advocacy that were introduced in August. For more information, please contact Mr. Cody Corcelius, Policy Analyst, AVMA Division of State Advocacy (wcorcelius@avma.org).

Animal abuse reporting

Legislation in **Louisiana** ([LA HB 842](#)) would provide immunity from both civil liability and criminal prosecution for veterinarians and veterinary technicians for the reporting of animal cruelty in good faith.

Board of Veterinary Medicine

In **Georgia**, a proposed bill ([GA SB 604](#)) would make the State Board of Veterinary Medicine an independent state agency attached to the Department of Agriculture for administrative reasons. The **Georgia Veterinary Medical Association** supports the Georgia State Board of Veterinary Medicine becoming an independent agency under the Department of Agriculture, similarly to that of the State Veterinarian, and believes this move would bring veterinarians closer together under one department.

Cannabis

A new law in **Utah** ([UT SB 209](#)) clarifies that a licensed veterinarian is not prohibited from discussing the effect of cannabis on an animal with the animal's owner. AVMA resources and more information on the use of cannabis in pets can be found [here](#).

Courtroom animal advocates

Rhode Island's [RI HB 7678](#) would authorize the appointment of pro bono attorneys and supervised law students to act as animal advocates in animal cruelty and abuse cases to serve the interests of justice. *In the interest of the animal* is a very different legal standard than *in the interest of justice*. *In the interest of justice* includes a variety of societal interest regarding the humane treatment of animals, notions of fairness, and the interest of the owner, while *in the interest of the animal* has often been seen and used as an attempt to require courts to apply the same types of standards as they would for a child.

Education

Passage of **Utah's** [UT HB 3](#) appropriates funds for the programming, design, and construction of the College of Veterinary Medicine at the Utah State University.

Licensure

Championed by the **New Mexico Veterinary Medical Association**, a new law in **New Mexico** ([NM HB 56](#)) lengthens temporary permits for out-of-state veterinarians working in zoos and

aquariums, allowing veterinarians who work in these very specialized areas to oversee treatment of the animals in these facilities without needing to gain a full New Mexico license.

A proposed regulation in **Oregon** ([OR OAR 875-010-0000](#)) would amend the experience requirements for Veterinarian License Applicants who are requesting a waiver of the Clinical Competency Test. Currently, five continuous years of practice immediately prior to the application date is required. The proposal would change this to require five of the last 10 years immediately prior to the application date.

Non-economic damages

On March 2, representatives from the AVMA and **Maryland Veterinary Medical Association** (MDVMA) testified before two different Maryland General Assembly committee hearings on the proposed expansion of non-economic damages into litigation involving pets ([MD SB 815/MD HB 1375](#)). Testimony emphasized the AVMA and MDVMA's opposition to this legislation because it will harm pets and the ability of veterinarians to provide affordable veterinary care. These bills are a response to a case in Maryland where their highest court, the Court of Appeals, said non-economic damages were not permissible in pet litigation cases. The AVMA and MDVMA also filed a legal brief in this case when it was pending before the court, expressing that such awards are bad public policy. If this legislation became law, the potential recovery of non-economic damages would be permissible for injury or loss of an animal but prohibited for many close human relationships. Current Maryland law does not allow the recovery of non-economic damages for injury or loss of a best friend, sibling, grandparent, or other close relatives. For 20 years, the AVMA has been working with state VMAs and a broad coalition of groups against similar legislation in Arizona, California, Florida, Texas, Vermont, and others. Thanks to advocacy from the MDVMA along with the AVMA, [HB 1375](#) has been withdrawn by the sponsor.

Scope of practice

Legislation involving scope of practice concerns continues to arise in states even with many legislative sessions beginning to wind down. Legislation in **Delaware** ([DE HB 333](#)) would prohibit a declawing procedure on a cat except when necessary for a therapeutic purpose while a bill in **New Jersey** ([NJ S 1925](#)) would prohibit cropping or altering the tail or ears of dogs.

Veterinary Technicians

Delaware legislators are considering legislation ([DE SB 228](#)) that would allow veterinary technicians to administer rabies vaccinations to dogs, cats, and ferrets. Under current law, only licensed veterinarians may administer rabies vaccinations.

Animal Abuse Cruelty			
State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Connecticut	CT SB 235	Would require veterinarians to report to local law enforcement agencies when they treat dogs that they believe have been used in animal fighting.	Introduced 3/1/2022

Louisiana	LA HB 607	Would increase the minimum fine and imprisonment for a conviction of cruelty to animals; and allow the court to require the offender to pay for any expenses incurred for medical treatment of the animal.	Introduced 3/4/2022
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Animal Disease | Vaccination

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Rhode Island	RI HB 7785	<p>Would allow the director of the department of environmental management to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish quarantine or control zones consistent with state and United States Department of Agriculture emergency plans to restrict the movement of animals, animal carcasses, animal tissues, and animal products suspected of being affected with a contagious, infectious, zoonotic or communicable disease; and, 2. Order examination or testing of any quarantined animal or animal in a quarantine or control zone for disease surveillance purposes or as a term of the order of quarantine and authorize qualified department personnel to carry out any examination or testing or may order the testing to be performed by a licensed veterinarian qualified to perform the testing. 	Introduced 3/2/2022

Companion Animals

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
New Jersey	NJ S 2108	<p>Would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow any person to anonymously deliver a domestic companion animal to a shelter, pound, veterinary hospital, or police station in the State, and leave the animal with an employee, veterinarian, or police officer at the facility; 2. Provide that the person would not be liable for the care or disposition of the animal; and, 3. Provide that no employee, veterinarian, or police officer at the shelter, pound, veterinary hospital, or police station, may refuse to accept any domestic companion animal. 	Introduced 3/3/2022
New Jersey	NJ S 2278	Would prohibit any breed or size restriction for dog ownership.	Introduced 3/14/2022
New Jersey	NJ A 3097	Would require licensure for pet grooming.	Introduced 3/7/2022
New York	NY A 9663	Would require licensure of pet grooming facilities.	Introduced 3/28/2022

Education

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Idaho	ID S. 1380	Would establish a loan repayment program for rural, large animal veterinarians.	Introduced 3/7/2022
Utah	UT HB 3	Would appropriate funds for the programming, design, and construction of the College of Veterinary Medicine at the Utah State University.	Finalized 3/24/2022

Euthanasia

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
New Jersey	NJ S 1736	Would prohibit euthanizing animals in shelters or pounds except for health or safety reasons.	Introduced 2/28/2022

Legal			
State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Louisiana	LA HB 842	Would provide immunity from civil liability or criminal prosecution for veterinarians and veterinary technicians for the reporting of animal cruelty in good faith.	Introduced 3/21/2022
Rhode Island	RI HB 7678	Would authorize the appointment of pro bono attorneys and supervised law students to act as animal advocates in animal cruelty and abuse cases to serve the interests of justice.	Introduced 3/1/2022

Licensure			
State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
New Jersey	NJ A 3126	Would: 1. Increase the penalty of any person who has been found to have practiced veterinary medicine without a license to be guilty of a crime of the fourth degree; and, 2. State that a person is guilty of an aggravated violation if the person performs surgery or any other serious operation on any animal or attempts to cause or purposely or knowingly causes a serious injury or harm, or death of any animal.	Introduced 3/7/2022
New Mexico	NM HB 56	Would: 1. Require that a nonresident veterinarian be issued no more than a sixty-day temporary permit and no more than two sixty-day permits in a calendar year; and, 2. Allow a nonresident veterinarian that is employed by or contracted with the state, a municipality, or a county to provide veterinary services at a nationally accredited zoo or aquarium in New Mexico to have a temporary permit issued for no more than six-months and no more than two consecutive six-month, temporary permits.	Finalized 3/2/2022
Oregon	OR OAR 875-010-0000	Would amend the experience requirements for Veterinarian License Applicants requesting a waiver of the Clinical Competency Test requirement from 5 continuous years immediately prior to the application date to five of the last 10 years immediately prior to the application date.	Introduced 3/1/2022

Livestock			
State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Rhode Island	RI HB 7665 RI SB 2444	Would allow licensed veterinarians to control and prescribe chorionic gonadotropin strictly for farm cattle treatments or any nonhuman species when that use is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.	Introduced 3/2/2022

Marijuana Cannabis Hemp			
State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Utah	UT SB 209	Would clarify that a licensed veterinarian is not prohibited from discussing the effect of cannabis on an animal with the animal's owner.	Finalized 3/21/2022

Scope of Practice			
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State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Delaware	DE HB 333	Would prohibit a declawing procedure on a cat except when necessary for a therapeutic purpose.	Introduced 3/10/2022
New Jersey	NJ S 1925	Would prohibit cropping or altering the tail or ears of dog; establishes as animal cruelty offense.	Introduced 3/3/2022

Spaying | Neutering

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
New Jersey	NJ S 2202	Would expand the reduced spaying and neutering program to any State resident who is disabled.	Introduced 3/7/2022

State Programs | Board of Veterinary Medicine

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Georgia	GA SB 604	Would make the State Board of Veterinary Medicine (BVM) an independent state agency attached to the Department of Agriculture for administrative purposes only. The BVM is currently based out of the Secretary of State's office.	Introduced 3/4/2022
Washington	WA SB 5753	Would update the Veterinary Board of Governors by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the number of members from seven to nine; 2. Increasing the number of member veterinarians from five to six; 3. Changing "lay person" to "member of the public," 4. Requiring a majority of the members to be present to represent a quorum (5 present); 5. Requiring a majority of the quorum to carry a motion or resolution, adopt a rule, or pass a measure; and, 6. Requiring that no more than two members, instead of one, can be from the same congressional district. 	Finalized 3/30/2022

Taxes: Credits | Exemptions | Sale & Use

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
New Jersey	NJ S 2138	Would provide a gross income tax deduction for veterinarian expenses.	Introduced 3/4/2022

Veterinary Technicians | Veterinary Assistants

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Delaware	DE SB 228	Would allow veterinary technicians to administer rabies vaccinations to dogs, cats, and ferrets.	Introduced 3/3/2022

Wildlife | Zoo Animals

State	Link	Summary of Proposed Bill or Regulation	Status
Connecticut	CT HB 5293	Would prohibit the use of wild and exotic animals in traveling circuses.	Introduced 3/1/2022