



Legislative Update April 2025



In late March, the [CVMA Board of Governors](#) took positions on California legislation that affects the veterinary profession. View the legislative positions [here](#). For more information on the legislative bills being followed by the CVMA this year, log in to [cvma.net](#) and then visit the [Legislative Action Center](#) in the Advocacy section.

Among the top CVMA Priority Bills include:

**[AB 1502](#) (Assembly Business and Professions Committee)
California Veterinary Medical Board Sunset Review
CVMA Position: *Support***



Every four years, each regulatory board under the California Department of Consumer Affairs must come before a joint Senate and Assembly Review Committee of the California legislature to report on their performance, summarize current issues and projects, and obtain statutory authorization to continue functioning. Termed “Sunset Review,” the process involves extensive reporting from the boards as well as comments from the public and interested stakeholder organizations.

This year, the CVMA is actively speaking out about multiple issues affecting the veterinary profession at the California Veterinary Medical Board (CVMB) Sunset Review. The CVMA has testified at the CVMB Sunset Review hearings and engage legislators and committee consultants at the Capitol to provide comments and make requests on behalf of the profession. The following is a summary of issues:

California Veterinary Medical Board: The CVMA is making comments on a number of issues being addressed by the CVMB, including Board composition, licensure loopholes, the existing “owner” exemption law that permits animal owners to practice veterinary medicine on their own animals, illegal veterinary practice, and more. Of paramount importance, the CVMA is asking for statutory changes that will mandate that 1) at least one

member of the CVMB be a practicing large animal veterinarian, and 2) that criteria for Board subject matter expert qualifications be codified into state law.

Read the CVMA comment letter [here](#).

Read the CVMB Sunset report [here](#).

Read the State Legislature Analysis [here](#).

Watch CVMA's Lobbyist and Legislative Director testify at the Veterinary Medical Board's Sunset Review Hearing [here](#).

[SB 6](#) (Ashby): Xylazine Controlled Substance Scheduling
CVMA Position: *Support*



This important legislation will add xylazine to the list of California controlled substances while incorporating provisions that allow continued access to the drug by licensed veterinarians in the course of legitimate practice. The CVMA is working closely with the authors to help align this legislation with the federal Combatting Illicit Use of Xylazine Act and will serve as a support witness for this bill.

Read the CVMA support letter [here](#).

[AB 516](#) (Kalra): Registered veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants: scope of practice.

CVMA Co-Sponsored Bill

CVMA Position: *Support*



This year, the CVMA has partnered with the San Francisco SPCA and the San Diego Humane Society to co-sponsor legislation that clarifies the roles and permissible tasks of registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) and veterinary assistants (VAs) in both private practice and in animal shelters. Considerable confusion exists in the veterinary profession regarding what tasks RVTs and VAs are permitted to perform in practice and the statutory clarifications in these bills clearly state that they are permitted to do anything not otherwise prohibited by law. Only veterinarians and diagnose, prognose, prescribe and perform surgery- thus these tasks are prohibited for RVTs and VAs. There are additional tasks that one must either by a veterinarian or a RVT to perform- thus they are prohibited for VAs. RVTs and VAs in animal shelters are permitted by law to perform routine intake tasks pursuant to written or telephonic orders by a supervising veterinarians, and thus these are permitted by statutory authority. This bill will help to clarify confusion surrounding those rules.

Currently, this bill has been placed on the “consent” calendar- which means that unless future concerns are raised about it, it will move through the legislative process without public hearings. Consent is granted to bills that have no known opposition or controversial contents.

Read the CVMA coalition support letter [here](#).
Read the Fact Sheet [here](#).

SB 602 (Cortese): Veterinarians: veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

CVMA Co-Sponsored Bill
CVMA Position: *Support*



This bill is also co-sponsored by the San Francisco SPCA and the San Diego Humane Society and will expand the allowable duties of RVTs in animal shelters to permit them to administer vaccines and parasite control medications to the public's animals without the supervising veterinarian on the premises. Existing law requires a veterinarian to be present on the premises, but animal shelters are a unique environment because they are mandated to provide low-cost rabies vaccines to the public, but do not always have a veterinarian present on-site during business hours. For this reason, and to increase access to veterinary care, this bill will create a special allowance for RVTs in animal shelters.

Currently, this bill has been placed on the “consent” calendar- which means that unless future concerns are raised about it, it will move through the legislative process without public hearings. Consent is granted to bills that have no known opposition or controversial contents.

Read the CVMA coalition support letter [here](#).
Read the CVMA Fact Sheet [here](#).

AB 463 (Rodriguez)
Emergency medical services: police canines.
CVMA Position: *Support, if amended*



This bill will permit injured police/ search and rescue dogs to be transported to veterinary hospitals in ambulances. While the CVMA is generally supportive of this concept, it is concerned with specific bill language which will exempt emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics from the practice of veterinary medicine when they, *“provide emergency medical care to a police canine or search and rescue dog injured in the line of duty while being transported to a veterinary clinic or similar facility.”* The CVMA worked extensively in 2018 on [SB 1305](#) (Glazer)

which permitted first responders to provide “basic first aid” to dogs and cats that included limited duties that were commensurate with their basic training in human medicine (such as administering oxygen and stopping bleeding, among others). EMTs/paramedics do not have animal-specific training and permitting them to provide unrestricted “emergency medical care” can result in significant consequences for the canine patient. The CVMA is seeking an amendment to this bill to align it with SB 1305.

Read the CVMA Support, if amended letter [here](#).

[AB 1503](#) (Assembly B&P Committee)
California Board of Pharmacy: Sunset Review
CVMA Position: *Position will be taken when bill is written*



For several years, the CVMA has attempted to communicate with the BOP regarding the lack of availability of several important medications as a result of overly stringent BOP regulations and enforcement policies for drug compounding and compounding pharmacies. As a result of the BOP's actions, California now only has a few veterinary compounding pharmacies to provide medications for millions of animals. Prior to recent [CVMA action at the BOP Sunset Review hearing](#), California was the only state in the country in which veterinarians were reporting that they did not have access to medications to treat patients, with several equine ophthalmic medications used to treat fungal keratitis, glaucoma, stromal abscesses, and other conditions not available. The CVMA tried multiple times to engage the BOP about this issue and others that are affecting the veterinary profession's ability to provide care to patients, but had not received responses from the BOP that demonstrated its intent to remedy the availability gaps. The CVMA was vocal at the State Legislature to alert it to the issues and request appropriate intervention, and as a result, all previously reported medications are now available in California through Wedgewood Compounding Pharmacy.

Read the CVMA comment letter [here](#).

Watch CVMA's Legislative Director testify at the California Board of Pharmacy: Sunset Review Hearing [here](#).

AB 867 (Lee) Veterinary medicine: animal declawing.

CVMA Position: *Oppose*



This bill marks the sixth attempt to ban the procedure of cat declawing in the California state legislature. The CVMA has traditionally been opposed to any measure that dictates how veterinarians practice veterinary medicine. The CVMA believes that decisions to perform procedures should be made by clients and their veterinarians, and in the case of declawing, only after all alternative possibilities have been explored. The veterinary profession has adequately regulated itself in regard to the declaw procedure as several major corporate conglomerates do not offer it as a service, it is not taught in veterinary schools and the CVMA policy discourages it as an elective procedure. The veterinary profession has moved away from this procedure by its own efforts and thus, the CVMA does not feel that it needs to be made into a crime in law.

While this bill does provide a narrow exception to the cat declaw ban by permitting declawing for therapeutic purposes, it would require the veterinary who performs the procedure to file a report with the CVMB. This requirement would subject the veterinarian to potential harm since CVMB documents are subject to public records requests.

This bill is also attempting to overturn an existing state law that would permit a local ordinance (such as one passed by a city or county) to override the state Veterinary Medicine Practice Act. The CVMA sponsored legislation in the 1990s to prohibit this so that individual municipalities could not dictate which veterinary procedures and services were offered in their jurisdictions. This legal precedent has been invoked in other important medical rights legal proceedings in California outside of veterinary medicine and should not be overturned.

Read the CVMA opposition letter [here](#). Read the CVMA Fact sheet [here](#).

SB 687 (Ochoa Bogh): Chiropractors: animal chiropractic practitioners.

CVMA Position: *Oppose*



STATUS: BILL WILL NOT PROCEED THIS YEAR

This bill attempts to permit chiropractors who have taken a certification course to expand their practices to include animals by creating a new profession called “animal chiropractic practitioners.”

The bill will circumvent veterinarian involvement in animal chiropractic cases by allowing direct access to chiropractors by consumers, despite chiropractors having no formal training on animals as part of their

standardized licensing curriculum. The CVMA is opposed to any attempts by human health care practitioners to expand their practice acts to include animals. There are multiple examples across animal species in which a complex medical condition, often insidious in its onset, can mimic a chiropractic condition. Chiropractors have no training to identify these conditions, which can result in a delay in proper treatment, prolonged animal suffering, and unnecessary cost to consumers who may instinctively seek a chiropractor for a divergent condition in their pet.

After extensive CVMA lobbying, senate committee consultants proposed a substantial number of amendments to SB 687 which were ultimately not accepted by the bill author or sponsor. The bill will not be voted on in the 2025 legislative session, but may be reintroduced in 2026. The author has expressed interest in holding a joint informational stakeholder hearing, in which the CVMA will actively participate if invited.

The CVMA wishes to thank its strong opposition coalition which included the American Veterinary Medical Association, Sacramento Valley Veterinary Medical Association, Southern California Veterinary Medical Association, and San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association. In addition, thank you to all members who responded to the CVMA Action Alerts to oppose this measure, your voices were heard.

Read the CVMA coalition opposition letter [here](#), and Fact Sheet [here](#).

AB 1458 (Wallis) Animal physical therapy.

CVMA Position: *Oppose*

STATUS: BILL WILL NOT PROCEED THIS YEAR



AB 1458 is the third attempt of a small group of physical therapists to expand their scope of practice to include animals. After taking a “no-fail” certification course that is based solely on dogs, a physical therapist would be allowed to open their own physical therapy practices - with no veterinarian involvement - to work on all species of animals. One popular certification course says on its website describes its final exam as follows: “At the end of the course, students are given a take-home, open-book final exam that they have 14 days to complete. Collaboration with classmates is encouraged.” Like SB 687, AB 1458 is a reckless “scope creep” bill proposed by a small group of individuals who do not recognize the amount of education required to safely and competently work on animals, nor the harm that will come to consumers and their pets from unsupervised physical therapy services. In fact, if an animal were to be injured by an unsupervised human-practicing physical therapist at one of these offsite locations, there would be no way to render emergency care at the “animal physical therapy” practice.

The Assembly Business and Professions Committee cited several concerning components of the original bill language and recommended multiple amendments to the bill to place similar guardrails to those proposed for chiropractors in SB 687. Following

the proposed amendments, it appears that there was no agreement reached between the Committee, the author, and sponsors in time for the April 29th bill hearing deadline. Since all Assembly measures with fiscal implications needed to be out of their first house policy committees by Friday, May 2, this means that AB 1458 will not be considered this year. Instead, AB 1458 will become a “two-year” bill and will not be eligible to be presented again in a hearing until January 2026. The CVMA wants to thank everyone who took time to write their legislator to encourage them to oppose the bill.”

The CVMA wishes to thank its strong opposition coalition which included the American Veterinary Medical Association, Sacramento Valley Veterinary Medical Association, Southern California Veterinary Medical Association, and San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association. In addition, thank you to all members who responded to the CVMA Action Alerts to oppose this measure, your voices were heard.

Read the CVMA coalition opposition letter [here.](#) and Fact Sheet [here.](#)

CVMA members may visit the [CVMA Legislative Action Center](#) for more bill information.