



2024 California Legislative Wrap Up

The 2024 California legislative session came to a close on September 30, marking the last day for the Governor to either sign or veto bills. Of the 2,124 bills introduced at the beginning of the legislative session in February of 2024, approximately half of those measures made their way to the Governor's desk for consideration.

The CVMA is proud to report success at the Capitol this year through active representation on a number of critical measures that impacted animals and the veterinary profession. Below is a summary of the CVMA's priority bills and their ultimate result in the 2024 legislative session.

SB 1233 (Wilk) Postsecondary education: veterinary medicine: spay and neuter techniques.

CVMA-Sponsored Bill

CVMA Position: SUPPORT

CURRENT BILL STATUS: Signed by Governor—Chaptered

The CVMA is thrilled to announce that on September 26, 2024, Governor Gavin Newsom signed CVMA-sponsored SB 1233 to implement landmark legislation that will help fight California's pet overpopulation epidemic by creating High-Quality, High-Volume Spay/Neuter (HQHVSN) training certification programs at both of California's veterinary schools. "The CVMA applauds Governor Newsom for signing SB 1233 by Senator Wilk and for recognizing the need for these important HQHVSN training programs in California," said Dan Baxter, the CVMA's Executive Director. "The CVMA is grateful to the coalition of recognized spay/neuter advocacy leaders who helped to secure the bill's passage, including Social Compassion in Legislation, the San Francisco SPCA, the ASPCA, Cal Animals, the San Diego Humane Society, the Michelson Center for Public Policy, the Greater Los Angeles Spay Neuter Collaborative, the Latino Alliance for Animal Care Foundation, and the Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society Veterinary Medical Alliance. These groups offered strong support for the bill from

the very beginning and were active partners throughout the Session. This bill is truly a win-win-win—for animals, animal shelters, and the veterinary profession."

The Governor issued a press release in conjunction with his signing of the measure and an additional measure pertaining to pet insurance (SB 1217-Glazer) stating: "Every pet deserves a home—and every home is happier with a pet—but the rising cost of pet care and the growing number of animals in need of adoption present real challenges. California is addressing both issues: reforming the pet insurance industry and supporting efforts to meet the high demand for accessible spay and neuter services to address overcrowding in shelters."

To help address pet overpopulation issues, the CVMA sponsored SB 1233 (Wilk) to create HQHVSN certification programs at California's two veterinary schools: Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine in Pomona and the University of California, Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. The bill provides HQHVSN elective certification courses for qualified California veterinary students, as well as for veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) in private practice.

Students enrolled in the certification courses will learn HQHVSN surgical techniques in addition to the assembly-line/team approach principles of HQHVSN. Students and veterinarians will be required to successfully complete a set number of surgeries using HQHVSN techniques to earn their certificate. RVTs will not be authorized to perform surgery under the terms of this bill but will instead be instructed in the crucial techniques needed to support HQHVSN surgeries. Licensed veterinarians and RVTs who complete the program will earn continuing education credit in addition to their certificate. Veterinary students will be able to take the certification courses for free, while licensees will pay a nominal fee. The spay and neuter surgeries will be provided at either no cost or at a low cost to qualified dog and cat owners, based on financial need. Each school will have the ability to structure its own program in accordance with HQHVSN best practices, available facilities, resources, and staff.

This legislation provides short-term and long-term solutions to the issue of dogs and cats needing to be sterilized by not only creating two large HQHVSN centers in both Northern and Southern California, but also by better equipping the veterinary workforce with the knowledge, skill, and ability to safely and efficiently perform HQHVSN surgeries.

The CVMA will continue to work with state officials to secure state funding for the programs as well as directly with both of the veterinary schools to construct and implement the curricula.

Finally, the CVMA wishes to thank Senator Scott Wilk and his staff for their tireless efforts to pass this bill.

AB 3029 (Bains) Controlled substances.
SB 1502 (Ashby) Controlled substances: xylazine.

CVMA Position: SUPPORT

CURRENT BILL STATUSES:

AB 3029: Held in Senate Appropriations Committee/Dead

SB 1502: Held in Assembly Public Safety Committee/Dead

Both of these bills were written to add xylazine to the Schedule III category of the State of California controlled substances list to help reduce the illicit use of xylazine among human substance abusers. Xylazine, also known as “tranq” in the illicit drug trade, is commonly combined with fentanyl and taken by drug abusers. The physiologic ramifications of these drugs in humans can be lethal, and thus both of the above legislators attempted to take proactive steps to limit the availability of xylazine to anyone other than a licensed veterinarian for legitimate veterinary medical practices. Xylazine is a commonly used sedative among livestock, equine, and wildlife veterinarians and is also utilized by animal control officers in the field who administer it under veterinarian direction.

The CVMA worked closely with both authors to help ensure that veterinarian access to xylazine was maintained following the transition of xylazine becoming a scheduled drug. AB 3029 was authored by Assemblymember Dr. Jasmeet Bains, a physician specializing in addiction medicine. SB 1502 was sponsored by Governor Gavin Newsom and authored by the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee Chair, Senator Angelique Ashby. The CVMA testified in support of both bills during multiple committee hearings at the Capitol and provided technical expertise to both authors and the Governor’s staff. Unfortunately, neither bill made it to the Governor’s desk, as there were disputes between the two houses regarding how the measures should interface with actions on this subject by the United States Congress and the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

AB 814 (Lowenthal) Veterinary medicine: animal physical rehabilitation

CVMA Position: OPPOSE

CURRENT BILL STATUS: Bill Pulled from Committee Review at Author’s Request/Dead

This measure would have permitted physical therapists to open their own practices to provide animal physical rehabilitation services to all species of animals by veterinary referral. The bill was a repeat-attempt to override current state law by: 1) proposing that direct veterinarian supervision be removed in practices run by physical therapists and 2) avoiding minimum standards required of veterinary practices, such as inclusion of a licensee manager and other consumer protection provisions. The bill did not address access to veterinary care as the sponsors contended, but instead introduced a scope of practice creep by healing arts personnel with no formal licensing curriculum in animals. This would be unsafe for animals and deeply insulting

to the veterinary profession, and if allowed would pave the way for incursions by other healing arts professions. In addition, the California Veterinary Medical Board (CVMB) had estimated a \$1.2 million implementation cost if the bill had passed. Since the VMB’s operating budget is not augmented by the general fund and comes solely from licensing and permit fees, the CVMA expressed concern about how this cost would have been covered.

The CVMA formed a coalition in opposition to AB 814, whose members included the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Sacramento Valley Veterinary Medical Association, the San Diego County Veterinary Medical Association, and the Southern California Veterinary Medical Association.

This bill was held over in the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee during last year’s legislative session but was resurrected in June of this year. Due in part to strong opposition from the CVMA and the CVMB, the bill was pulled from consideration by the author and was not heard in July as previously scheduled. The bill is dead for 2024, but the policy committee consultants will be convening a stakeholder group to continue discussions about animal physical rehabilitation. The CVMA will be a part of those talks.

SB 1478 (Nguyen) Veterinary medicine: registered veterinary technicians.

CVMA Position: WATCH

CURRENT BILL STATUS: Signed by Governor—Chaptered

This bill will add specific language to existing law that better defines the written protocols that must be established by shelter veterinarians for RVTs to follow when managing animals in shelters. The protocols include time periods by which an impounded animal must be assessed at intake and monitored while in the custody of the agency; protocols to address the treatment of common medical conditions encountered in animals and for controlling infectious and zoonotic diseases, controlling acute pain, and preventing environmental contamination; communication requirements between the registered veterinary technician and the supervising veterinarian; and euthanasia criteria for medically related cases. The CVMA communicated with the author as well as with several shelter veterinarians and other stakeholders early in the Session regarding the focus and intent of this bill. ■



CVMA Legislative Action Center

For specific information on bills or to track CVMA-monitored bills through the legislative process, visit the CVMA’s online Legislative Action Center in the Advocacy section of cvma.net.



Priority Bills

Bill #	Author	Title	CVMA Position
SB 1233	Wilk	Postsecondary education: veterinary medicine: spay and neuter techniques. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Sponsor/Support
AB 814	Lowenthal	Veterinary medicine: animal physical rehabilitation. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Oppose
AB 2133	Kalra	Veterinary medicine: registered veterinary technicians. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Oppose
AB 2954	Carrillo	Cats: declawing procedures: prohibition. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Oppose
AB 3029	Bains	Controlled substances. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Support
SB 1502	Ashby	Controlled substances: xylazine. BILL HELD IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Support
SB 1478	Nguyen	Veterinary medicine: registered veterinary technicians. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch

Other Bills

Bill #	Author	Title	CVMA Position
AB 1902	Alanis	Prescription drug labels: accessibility. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch
AB 1983	Maienschein	Income taxes: voluntary contributions: Prevention of Animal Homelessness and Cruelty Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch
AB 1988	Muratsuchi	Stray animals: availability for adoption or release. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch
AB 2006	Mathis	Sales and Use Tax Law: exemption: over-the-counter medication. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2012	Lee	Rabies control data. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2216	Haney	Tenancy: common household pets. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2248	Maienschein	Contracts: sales of dogs and cats. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2265	McCarty	Animals: euthanasia. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2269	Flora	Board membership qualifications: public members. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Disapprove, Seek Info
AB 2425	Essayli	Bowie's Law: animals: adoption, shelter overcrowding, and breeding. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2445	Wallis	Prescriptions: personal use pharmaceutical disposal system. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Oppose Unless Amended
AB 2640	Kalra	Pupil instruction: animal dissection. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2761	Hart/Lowenthal	Product safety: plastic packaging: Reducing Toxics in Packaging Act. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 2964	Hart	Crimes: animal cruelty. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
AB 3053	Kalra	State-supported fairs: exhibits: regulations. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Disapprove Unless Amended
AB 3063	McKinnor	Pharmacies: compounding. BILL VETOED BY GOVERNOR.	Support
SB 902	Roth/Portantino	Firearms: public safety. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch
SB 921	Roth	Animal welfare. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Approve
SB 922	Roth	Animal cruelty. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Approve
SB 1067	Smallwood-Cuevas	Healing arts: expedited licensure process. BILL VETOED BY GOVERNOR.	Watch
SB 1093	Padilla	Vehicle equipment: tires. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Watch
SB 1217	Glazer	Pet insurance. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch
SB 1345	Smallwood-Cuevas	Employment discrimination: criminal history information. BILL FAILED DEADLINE IN POLICY COMMITTEE.	Disapprove
SB 1358	Nguyen	Rabies control data. BILL HELD IN FISCAL COMMITTEE.	Watch
SB 1459	Nguyen	Animal shelters. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR—CHAPTERED.	Watch