



Legislative Update September 2025

In late March, the [CVMA Board of Governors](#) took positions on California legislation that affects the veterinary profession. View the legislative positions [here](#) and status of the bills 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 actively spoke out about multiple issues affecting the veterinary profession at the California Veterinary Medical Board (CVMB) Sunset Review. In addition, the CVMA testified at all of 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 submitted comments early in the legislative session 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. To address several ongoing enforcement issues, the CVMA asked 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.

UPDATE: While the legislature did not grant the CVMA request to have CVMB subject matter expert qualification criteria written into state law, it has included language in the AB 1502 omnibus bill to require that at least one member of the CVMB be a practicing equine and/or livestock veterinarian.

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*



STATUS: This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations committee and thus will not proceed this year.

This important legislation aimed to add xylazine to the list of California controlled substances while incorporating provisions that would have permitted continued access to the drug by licensed veterinarians in the course of legitimate practice. The CVMA worked closely with the author to help align this legislation with the federal Combatting Illicit Use of Xylazine Act and served as a support witness for this bill.

Last year, an identical version of this bill was halted in the Assembly Public Safety Committee due to concerns set forth by the committee consultants regarding scheduling xylazine in California ahead of it being placed on the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) list.

Read the CVMA support letter [here](#). Watch the SB 6 Bill hearing [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 can 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 in accordance with [existing law](#)- 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.

This bill received “consent” status in the Assembly, and also passed the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development committee in June. It is currently awaiting Floor vote.

Watch the Senate B&P bill hearing with CVMA support testimony [here](#).
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.

This bill received “consent” status in both houses. Consent is granted to bills that have no known opposition or controversial contents. It has passed all of its policy committee hearings as of June. This bill passed the Floor vote in both houses and now heads to the Governor’s desk for consideration.

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

AB 463 (Rodriguez)

Emergency medical services: police canines.

CVMA Position: Support



STATUS: This bill was signed by the Governor and will be enacted on January 1, 2026.

This bill will permit injured police/ search and rescue dogs to be transported to veterinary hospitals in ambulances. The original bill language exempted 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 initial bill language was concerning because 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. Thus, the CVMA sought an amendment to the bill to change the term “emergency medical care” to “basic first aid”- which is currently defined in law.

The CVMA is proud to report that the Author accepted the amendment request and the bill language has been changed to address previous concerns.

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

Read the June 4 CVMA Support 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 seeks to ban any procedure that alters a feline's toes, claws, or paws to prevent or impair their normal function, unless the procedure is performed for a therapeutic purpose.

The CVMA is opposed to target legislation that specifically bans a procedure that veterinarians can perform and believes that decisions to perform veterinary medical procedures should be made by clients and their veterinarians on a case-by-case basis. Since the veterinary profession has moved away from declawing procedures through self-regulation, the CVMA believes that banning it under the threat of criminal sanctions is unnecessary.

This bill passed the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee, but not before numerous amendments requested by the CVMA were incorporated.

1. The bill would have required the veterinarian who performed the procedure for therapeutic purposes to file a report with the California Veterinary Medical Board (CVMB). This requirement would subject the veterinarian to potential harm since CVMB documents are subject to public records requests. This section was stricken from the bill.
2. This bill also attempted 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 2013 to prohibit municipalities from banning acts falling within healing arts professionals' scope of practice. This legal precedent—now memorialized in Business and Professions Code section 460—has been invoked in other important medical

rights legal proceedings in California both involving and outside of veterinary medicine, and it should not be overturned. Based on the CVMA's opposition, the sponsor's effort to rekindle this municipal power was stricken from the bill.

3. As originally written, the bill would have prevented veterinarians from applying vinyl nail caps to a cat's claws since the bill's definition of declawing included any procedure to alter a feline's toes, claws, or paws to prevent or impair normal function. The author agreed to amend this section to provide clarification affirmatively stating that the application of caps to the cat's nails is not prohibited, however those amendments have yet to surface. In lieu of potential amendments, the Author may also elect to place a letter in the public file for the bill clarifying the bill's intent not to prevent the application of vinyl nail caps to a cat's claws.

Despite these amendments, the CVMA continues to oppose this bill on the philosophical basis that veterinary medicine is a self-regulating profession, and the government should not dictate which procedures a doctor performs.

Read the CVMA opposition letter [here](#). Read the CVMA Fact sheet [here](#). Watch the AB 867 Senate Business and Professions Committee hearing [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.

The bill was scheduled for hearing in the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee at the end of April. Heading into the hearing, the committee chair and consultants proposed a series of amendments to the bill, seeking to create guardrails for chiropractic practice on animals. However, the author and sponsor elected to discontinue the bill this year and turn it into a “two-year” measure that may be revived in the 2026 legislative session.

An informational hearing was held on August 25 by the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee so that senators on the committee could more thoroughly understand the issue. The CVMA actively participated in the hearing to provide information on the veterinary school curriculum as it relates to animal physical rehabilitation and musculoskeletal manipulation, and to provide a practice prospective on how these services are currently being performed. More information about the hearing is available [here](#).

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 are being 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, the bill author and sponsor pulled the bill from the hearing schedule and elected for the bill to become a “two-year” bill for 2026.

An informational hearing was held on August 25 by the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee so that senators on the committee could more thoroughly understand the issue. The CVMA actively participated in the hearing to provide information on the veterinary school curriculum as it relates to animal physical rehabilitation and musculoskeletal manipulation, and to provide a practice prospective on how these services are currently being performed. More information about the hearing is available [here](#).

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

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