



2021 Legislative Update

October 10, 2021

This year's legislation was abbreviated as many lawmakers opted to suspend their bills as a result of challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite a reduced number of legislative bills, several bills of importance to the veterinary profession did make their way through the legislative process. The CVMA worked to represent the veterinary profession to bill authors, committee consultants and chairs, members of the legislature and stakeholders on those bills. A complete list of those bills with links to bill language as well as the CVMA's positions may be accessed by members in the [CVMA Legislative Action Center](#) under the Government tab at [cvma.net](#).

The following bills were of significant importance:

[AB 1282 \(Bloom\) \(coauthor Wilk\): Veterinary medicine: blood banks for animals](#)

This year, Assemblymember Richard Bloom, along with Senator Scott Wilk as a coauthor, introduced legislation that will phase out the two closed-colony blood banks and replace them with establishments that collect blood from community-sourced animals. The CVMA participated in stakeholder discussions on this issue to represent the needs of the veterinary profession in preserving a safe and adequate supply of blood and blood products. Specifically, the CVMA advocated for an expert advisory committee at the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to provide guidance resources to assist the veterinary profession with best practices for community blood banking. As a result of this request, the bill Author and sponsors were able to successfully secure \$1 million in the state budget for the CDFA to implement a community bloodbank oversight program. In addition, the CVMA successfully collaborated with the bill author and sponsors to determine a transition plan that will minimize shortages in blood and blood product supplies. This bill was signed by the Governor on October 9, 2021 and will take effect on January 1, 2022.

[AB 1533 \(Assembly Business and Professions Committee\) California Board of Pharmacy: Sunset Review](#)

The CVMA submitted comments to the Joint Sunset Review Committee regarding issues with the California Board of Pharmacy (BOP), primarily concerning veterinary compounding. One of

the items raised in the CVMA's comment letter was a request that at least one BOP-appointed member be a compounding pharmacist. The CVMA's request was successful, and that compositional requirement is being implemented accordingly. The CVMA will continue to advocate for the veterinary profession at both the legislature and the BOP to protect the ability of veterinarians to provide medications to animal patients. This bill was signed by the Governor on October 7, 2021.

[AB 1535](#) (Assembly Business and Professions Committee) Veterinary Medical Board: Sunset Review

The Assembly Business and Professions Committee and the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee periodically hold joint sunset oversight hearings to review boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). The sunset review process provides an opportunity for the DCA, the Legislature, the boards, and interested parties and stakeholders to discuss the performance of the boards, and make recommendations for improvements. The VMB was reviewed this year, and its report to the Sunset Review committee is posted on the VMB website. The CVMA also submitted two letters to the Sunset Review Committee with comments on issues addressed by the VMB in its sunset review report. The CVMA represented both the veterinary and registered veterinary technician professions throughout the Sunset review process. Among the most significant aspects of the bill include:

- Revise and raise the statutory limits for license and permit fees, and lower Registered Veterinary Technician fees
- Create a statutory exemption to premises registration with the VMB for animal shelters that perform the limited veterinary practices of vaccination, parasite control, and administering medications to individual animals pursuant to orders from a veterinarian with an established Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship for that animal
- Require registered veterinary technicians, veterinary assistants, and veterinary assistant controlled substance permit holders to wear name identification tags in at least 18-point type that include their license or permit numbers
- Expand the VMB's scope of authority in relation to premises permits of practices owned by non-veterinarians and prohibit them from interfering with, directing or controlling the professional judgment of any veterinarian or registered veterinary technician
- Make falsely advertising as a specialist or board-certified practitioner subject to board discipline

This bill was signed by the Governor on October 7, 2021.

[SB 547 \(AB 132\)](#) (Glazer) Animals: emergency response: California Veterinary Emergency Team program.

In the wake of the devastating Camp Fire in 2018, Senator Glazer saw the need for a veterinary emergency response team to help coordinate disaster response field operations as well as assist municipalities with animal emergency planning in order to mitigate animal suffering and community losses during California disasters. The CVMA was proud to support his effort to secure permanent funding from the state budget allocated to UC Davis to create the California Veterinary Emergency Team (CVET). This bill was incorporated into the AB 132 budget trailer bill to provide \$3 million annually to UC Davis for the development and maintenance of CVET. This bill will take effect on January 1, 2022.

[AB 384](#) (Kalra) Cannabis and cannabis products: animals: veterinary medicine – **DIED IN COMMITTEE**

Current law permits veterinarians to discuss the use of medicinal cannabis for animal patients with clients, but prohibits cannabis recommendation. This bill would have permitted veterinarians to recommend cannabis to clients, and would have made changes to state law regarding the sale of animal cannabis products in cannabis dispensaries. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee rendering it dead for the year.

[SB 585](#) (Stern): Cats: declawing procedures: prohibition—WITHDRAWN BY AUTHOR****

SB 585 was withdrawn by its author prior to its first committee hearing, rendering it dead for the year. This bill was similar to a failed 2019 measure proposed by Senator Stern that sought to prohibit feline phalangectomy for nontherapeutic purposes. SB 585 would have additionally required a veterinarian who performs a declawing procedure for therapeutic purposes to file a written report with the California Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) within 10 business days disclosing information about the animal patient and owner. The CVMA has historically opposed bills of this nature because the CVMA feels that decisions about medical treatment of an animal patient should be made between the veterinarian and client on a case-by-case basis within the context of a valid Veterinarian-Client-Patient Relationship.

[AB 553](#) (Kamlager) Pet Insurance—DIED IN COMMITTEE****

AB 553 did not garner enough votes to make it out of its first committee hearing, rendering it dead for the year. This bill would have expanded existing legal definitions pertaining to pet insurance in reference to medical advice, diagnosis, care, and treatment. Specifically, the bill would have required pet insurance policies issued, amended or renewed in California to provide full coverage for sterilization surgery and veterinary expenses associated with the

procedure. The bill would also have required a 20-day notice of cancellation of a pet insurance policy, or at least 10 days' notice in cases of nonpayment of premiums or of fraud.

CVMA Legislative Action Center

For specific information on bills or to track CVMA-monitored bills through the legislative process, visit the CVMA online Legislative Action Center, which now has a new look and format. The Voter Voice platform makes searching for relevant legislation easier and more user-friendly. Check out the improved format by logging onto cvma.net and clicking on the Government tab.