



North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association

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In Support of SB 2129

March 13, 2025

Chairman Beltz and Members of the House Agriculture Committee,

My name is Dr. Heather Mitchell, and I serve as the President of the North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association (NDVMA). Our organization proudly represents over 300 veterinarians across diverse disciplines, including livestock and companion animals, to research, academia, and government. We are committed to ensuring that statutory changes not only protect the interests of the public, our clients, and patients, but also recognize the practical realities of veterinary practice and support the ability of veterinarians to provide safe and effective veterinary services. To achieve this balance, collaboration among key stakeholders was essential in shaping legislation that meets both public protection and veterinary practice needs.

The combined efforts of the Senate Workforce Development Committee, NDVMA and NDVBME, through the leadership of Senators Bouchee and Powers, allowed all parties to address their concerns with the bill in a productive and cooperative manner. As a result of these efforts, several important amendments were successfully incorporated into the bill during the Senate process. However, a few amendments, including one proposed by the NDVMA and those addressed by the NDVBME, were inadvertently omitted from the final engrossed version. Today, NDVMA is here to express its support for SB 2129 and to advocate for the inclusion of these omitted amendments. Specifically, NDVMA would like to highlight a proposed amendment to SB 2129 in section 28, page 30, Indirect practice without a license for foreign practitioners.

This section allows an out-of-state veterinarian, licensed elsewhere but not in North Dakota, to provide telehealth services to a patient in North Dakota, as long as the two parties have established a veterinarian-client-patient relationship through an in-person exam per section 2 of this bill (page 6). Specifically, NDVMA would like to make this clear by amending line 5 to read: continuation of a previously (strike established) existing veterinarian-client-patient relationship as (strike defined) established under this chapter. The impact of this section is to facilitate a continuum of care for patients as well as adherence to veterinary standards for establishment of a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

In conclusion, SB 2129 and the proposed amendments by the NDVMA and NDVBME strike a careful balance between advancing the veterinary profession and safeguarding public safety and animal welfare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony re: SB 2129 and I am available for further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Mitchell, DVM". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather Mitchell, DVM
NDVMA President