



North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association

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In Opposition of SB 2384

February 7, 2023

Chair Lee and Members of the Human Services Committee,

The North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association (NDVMA) opposes SB 2384. The NDVMA is a professional organization for veterinarians and has spent more than a century representing the interests of veterinarians, their clients, and patients. Today, the organization has more than 300 members representing small, large animal, exotic, bovine and equine practitioners, as well as those veterinarians working in research, academic and government capacities.

SB 2384 would prohibit the use or administration of mRNA vaccines in ND. While NDVMA can appreciate the concern of the rapid rollout of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use for humans, this bill is problematic and short sighted by imposing limitations on the use of mRNA vaccines in both humans and animals.

Several mRNA vaccines in past years have entered clinical trials and have shown promise for offering solutions to combat emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases such as rabies, Zika, and influenza.

Animal infectious diseases remain a considerable challenge that impact animal health and food security. Notably, nearly two-thirds of the pathogens affecting humans originated from animals, such as the avian influenza virus, rabies virus, hepatitis e virus (HEV), and the recently emerged coronavirus called, SARS-CoV-2. Prevention by vaccination is considered the most successful intervention strategy against animal infectious diseases, particularly zoonoses.¹

Although only a few mRNA vaccines have been specifically studied in protecting against animal infectious diseases, the success of mRNA vaccines in humans has paved the way for advancement in veterinary medicine. Virus infections remain the major perceived threats to the global health and industrial livestock production. The major viruses from poultry and livestock lacking effective strategies to control include African swine fever virus (ASFV), porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus (PRRSV), porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV), foot and mouth disease virus (FMDV), bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV), bovine leukemia virus (BLV), and so on. The availability of an mRNA-based vaccines platform might strategically advance safe and effective vaccines to market for preventing these diseases.¹

NDVMA urges a DO NOT PASS on SB 2384.

1. Le T, Sun C, Chang J, Zhang G, Yin X. mRNA Vaccine Development for Emerging Animal and Zoonotic Diseases. *Viruses*. 2022 Feb 15;14(2):401. doi: 10.3390/v14020401. PMID: 35215994; PMCID: PMC8877136.