



North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association

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In Opposition of HB 1458

February 4, 2025

Chair Ruby and Members of the House Human Services Committee,

My name is Dr. Kim Brummond, and I serve on the legislative team of the North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association (NDVMA). Our organization proudly represents over 300 veterinarians across diverse disciplines, including companion animal, exotic, livestock, food and fiber animal, and equine medicine, as well as veterinarians in research, academia, and government. For more than a century, the NDVMA has been a steadfast advocate for the veterinary profession. 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.

The North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association (NDVMA) strongly opposes HB 1458. As the professional organization representing over 300 veterinarians across the state, including small animal, large animal, exotic, bovine, and equine practitioners, as well as those working in research, academics, and government sectors, we stand firmly against this bill that would severely disrupt veterinary practices in North Dakota and endanger both animal and human health.

HB 1458 poses a significant threat to public and animal health in North Dakota. The bill would create unnecessary legal obstacles for the use of recombinant or modified live vaccines, which have been instrumental in controlling diseases that threaten livestock, pets, and human health. These vaccines have proven to be essential in preventing and controlling a range of infectious diseases, including brucellosis, anthrax, respiratory disease complexes, and even zoonotic diseases that could have significant public health implications.

By restricting the ability to use or develop these vaccines without obtaining express written consent from every individual potentially exposed, HB 1458 would make it nearly impossible to manage and contain these diseases in the future. For example, vaccines against Avian Influenza, which affect both dairy herds and poultry flocks, would be severely hindered, leaving these industries vulnerable to outbreaks that could decimate entire herds and flocks. Likewise, pets would lose access to life-saving vaccines for diseases such as distemper, feline leukemia, and Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC), which could result in unnecessary suffering and fatalities.

The bill overlooks the importance of recombinant and modified live vaccines in controlling zoonotic diseases. Zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted from animals to humans, pose significant threats to public health. Two-thirds of emerging pathogens affecting humans have animal origins, including viruses such as avian influenza and hepatitis E. Vaccination is widely regarded as the most effective means of controlling these diseases at the source, and modified live and recombinant vaccines are critical tools in

this effort. By restricting the use of these vaccines, HB 1458 would weaken North Dakota's ability to control and prevent both animal and human disease outbreaks.

Moreover, **HB 1458 is redundant and unnecessary**. Existing oversight by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, the ND Board of Animal Health, and the State Veterinarian already ensures that vaccines and biologics used in North Dakota are safe, effective, and rigorously tested. The products in question are carefully regulated and have passed all necessary testing and approval processes to ensure they pose no harm to animals or humans. In addition, veterinarians and other professionals in this field are already subject to strict ethical and legal standards regarding the handling of vaccines, and there is no indication that current laws are insufficient to protect the public.

NDVMA strongly believes that HB 1458 would cause significant harm to animal and public health. The bill would create unnecessary legal vulnerability for veterinarians and disrupt vital public health protection. It would undermine decades of progress in controlling infectious diseases that directly impact both the agricultural economy and the safety of our food supply.

We urge you to consider the wide-ranging consequences of this bill and its potential to harm animal and human health in North Dakota. For the sake of the state's veterinary community, animal owners, and the broader public health, we respectfully ask that you **vote NO on HB 1458**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Brummond DVM', with a stylized flourish.

Dr. Kim Brummond
NDVMA
Past President (2022)