

Submitter: Meredith Pierce DVM  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB976

Hello Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Meredith Pierce, DVM and I am a licensed equine veterinarian in the state of Oregon. I oppose SB976 as it is currently written.

I understand the desire to bring this bill to session and ask for the approval since there is a shortage of large animal veterinarians. This shortage is everywhere. The solution is not to approve a bill to allow people with minimal training or certification the ability to perform tasks that some think should be allowed out of convenience. The dentists currently doing the work illegally are asking to continue to do so without explicit training in very needed areas of education. These areas are in courses such as Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology. Performing a "basic dental" requires an intimate knowledge, understanding and performance of the basic physical exam, such as recognizing a heart murmur or a fever before sedating a horse. As these things may be contraindicated and life threatening with sedation. Performing a dental without sedation is considered a failure to meet the standard of care in veterinary medicine. Additionally, how will dentists obtain the sedation they will administer, if not from a vet, which is currently illegal. I have had dentists ask me to sell them whole bottles of sedation so that they can use it themselves, which is illegal. I have also walked into barns where lay dentists are working on sedated horses with no vet in sight and they are the ones sedating with drugs they got from somewhere, illegally.

Are the dentists asking for this bill to be passed going to take classes in pharmacology to understand how the sedation works? Will they know what conditions or drug combinations can be lethal or contraindicated? Are they going to take a history to know what medication each horse is on? Are they going to recognize a problem or how to reverse it and with what drugs? How about physiology to assess a horse on physical exam to know when sedation is contraindicated? How will they know what conditions are painful or when to extract teeth? Will they be trained in anatomy to perform the nerve blocks needed to provide the standard of care that veterinarians are held at for extractions? How will they be able to administer pain medications to those horses that have extractions because that is a standard of care I am required to provide as a veterinarian? I am subject to lawsuits, license sanctions, fines and suspension if I don't follow the standard of care for my patients. Are these dentists going to have a license to practice and held to a similar standard? I know I am required to have a license, maintain continuing education and am subject to pharmacy board inspections. Will the dentists? You are

asking to change the law to allow a non veterinarian to perform, by all descriptions, the act of veterinary medicine without a license, or allowing them to perform procedures without being held to the same standard of care as a veterinarian. Allowing the later is a disservice to the horse as well as the owner.

These comments are about dentists being held to a higher standard if they want to perform equine dentistry. How will the state ensure the public safety in regards to the sedation aspect from both a purchasing, distribution, administration and handling aspect? How will you ensure some of these drugs are not diverted into drug users hands or the hands of children. Xylazine is a commonly used sedative in horses, though most vets don't use it for dentals, and it is now under scrutiny for becoming controlled. It is an alpha-2 class drug, just like dormosedan, which is the most commonly used drug for sedation in dentals, at least in my hands. Will the board of pharmacy require records from dentists to track their medication use. All these are things you need to strongly consider before making a decision to pass this bill. Thank you for your time.