

Submitter: Maura Mack
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB976

Hello Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Maura Mack, and I am an Equine Veterinarian in Redmond, Oregon. I am writing this letter on behalf of Black Diamond Equine Veterinary Clinic, we strongly oppose Senate Bill 976, which codifies allowing non-licensed individuals to provide equine dental services.

There are many antiquated and inhumane practices that are perpetuated by people practicing equine dentistry without a veterinary license.

The wording of the bill is in itself misleading. There is no standardized certification process for equine dentists without a veterinary license. There is no curriculum or oversight that ensures modern and humane dentistry practices are followed. There is no governing agency to award malpractice compensation for owners when significant harm to the horse is done by these professionals.

As Equine Veterinarians, we are trained in modern dentistry practices and any dentistry procedures should be performed by a veterinarian. Veterinary Equine Dentistry is an entire field of study.

1. These "certified" equine dentists cannot legally administer or prescribe sedation or pain control.

A thorough dental exam and equilibration cannot be performed without sedation and these practitioners cannot legally perform anesthesia in a horse. Any exam that is performed without sedation is inadequate and will not identify painful issues in the horse's mouth.

These horses will also experience significant fear and pain when being handled by these practitioners with the absence of adequate sedation.

2. These non-veterinarian equine dentists cannot perform nerve blocks for dental extractions. Pulling teeth without numbing the area first is inhumane.

3. These non-veterinarian equine dentists do not have the ability to take x-rays, make diet recommendations or counsel the owners on management of the horse. All of these are integrally linked to dental care in the horse.

We have personally treated numerous horses at our clinic that have been directly harmed by non-veterinarian dentists. Teeth have been aggressively filed down to the point that they are non-functional. Painful internal structures and nerves of the tooth were opened up due to inappropriate use of burrs within the mouth. Most frequently, painful dental disease is missed or misdiagnosed. In addition to the direct suffering of the animals under the care of these practitioners, the owners were unaware that they were receiving illegal and substandard care.

If this legislation was passed, horse welfare would be significantly impacted. Permanent and painful harm will be done to these horses.

Thank you for your time and I hope you vote against Senate Bill 976,

Drs. Paul Edmonds, Persia Neumann, and Maura Mack