

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash and Members of the Committee,

My name is Persia Neumann and I am an Equine Veterinarian practicing in Central Oregon. I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 976.

For many years now, laypeople (non-professionals) have been performing Equine Dentistry in this state even though this practice is illegal in the state of Oregon as per the Veterinary Practice Act. There is no standardized certification process for equine dental certificate holders, no requirement for annual continuing education to improve standard of care, and no licensure for these individuals that would protect the public in the form of malpractice claims when things go wrong.

I have firsthand been responsible for treating horses that have been harmed by laypersons performing equine dentistry and have seen the substandard care these horses are receiving. This substandard care has led to painful diseases and fatal outcomes in my patient population.

- Teeth that have been filed down beyond an acceptable level, leaving the horses unable to chew hay. This has led to euthanasia of at least two of my patients in recent years due to inability to efficiently process forage as a direct result of the dental procedures that were performed on them by laypersons.
- Teeth that have been filed down excessively to the point of exposing the pulp canals of the tooth and directly causing tooth root abscesses. These are incredibly painful, irreversible infections of teeth and the only treatment is to extract the teeth that have been harmed by the layperson involved.
- Incomplete oral examinations due to inadequate training and absence of thorough, sedated examinations that lead to diagnoses being missed (periodontal disease, oral tumors, fractured teeth).

Much like human dentistry, equine dentistry is a complex field of study. To perform a thorough oral examination, sedation anesthesia must be utilized to be able to see in the back of the mouth. Performing anesthesia in a horse requires a veterinary license per the Veterinary Practice Act. The act of sedation anesthesia can be directly harmful and even fatal if underlying disease (heart disease, organ dysfunction, neurologic disease, infections) are not detected by the individual performing it. Currently, many of the laypersons performing equine dentistry illegally in this state are utilizing anesthetic agents with no veterinary oversight. Those who are not using sedatives are inflicting unnecessary fear on horses during the procedure and would be unable to perform a complete oral examination.

Horse frequently require extractions of their teeth due to infections, crown fractures or severe periodontal disease. Laypersons cannot perform nerve blocks to numb affected areas prior to performing painful dental procedures. The extraction of teeth is considered a surgical procedure per the Veterinary Practice Act and cannot be performed by an unlicensed veterinary professional. The Veterinary Practice Act mandates that x-ray capabilities be available for all surgical dental procedures to ensure the procedure is done properly. Laypersons cannot own or operate x-ray units due to the direct danger that radiation exposure produces when used incorrectly. Laypersons in this state who are practicing illegally are performing these extractions without pain relief, adequate

anesthesia and without the ability to perform x-rays to ensure post operative complications do not arise. Performing painful dental procedures on animals without adequate pain relief is inhumane. There is no licensing board that will protect the public from complications that may occur as a result of these procedures.

Approving the practice of Equine Dentistry will directly negatively affect equine welfare in the state of Oregon. I urge you to vote no on SB 976. Thank you for your time and consideration on this topic.

Sincerely,

Persia Neumann, DVM

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Persia Neumann', followed by a horizontal line and the initials 'DVM' written below it.