

February 20, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SB 976:

Chairman Golden and members of the committee,

I am writing to you today to express my support of SB 976. As an Oregon horse owner SB 976 is important in increasing access to professional equine services currently afforded to citizens of other states.

The current restriction of equine dental care to licensed veterinarians limits access and choice to routine dental maintenance, increases the costs of baseline care and excludes a specialized demographic of technical experts in the field of equine dentistry that have demonstrated competency through formal dental programs and continuing education often overseen or conducted in collaboration with licensed veterinary staff. These concerns coupled with the declining rates of practicing large animal veterinarians are trending Oregon toward a state of restricted resources, particularly in rural areas where access is even more limited.

Passage of SB 976 would allow horse owners the right to choose from an additional demographic of professionals who are fully competent and technically skilled to provide dental care for our horses in compliment to veterinary care and farrier services. Like farriers, legally practicing equine dentists allow for professional relationships with licensed veterinarians for referrals, diagnostics and care plan recommendations. On average, individual horses receive farrier services that do not require veterinary licensure 6-8 times per year with the ability to dramatically improve a horse's health and well being through proficient work, or to do significant harm if conducted by an individual who is not highly skilled. Equine dentists will perform their services 1-2 times per year on a single horse. It is well accepted that farriers who have completed technical training and continuing education, while not a legal requirement to practice are welcome and often referred by practicing large animal veterinarians, yet equine dentistry has been excluded. Additionally, this bill is not requesting the alteration of current sedation

administration or surgical requirements. I am in support of the same professional acceptance of professionally trained and certified equine dentists.

Please pass SB 976 and improve access to legal and safe care of horses in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Marc Kingsbury