

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

Oregon Legislators,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed bill regarding equine dentistry. The practice of equine dental care requires significant education, skill development, and refinement, particularly when it involves horses of varying sizes. Veterinarians invest years in their education and continue to stay current with the latest research and advancements in the field of equine dentistry.

One such advancement is the use of power float tools, which allow veterinarians to perform more precise work and enhance the comfort of the horse. Additionally, veterinarians are trained to identify and address a range of dental health concerns, as well as other potential issues, while the horse is sedated. These concerns may go unnoticed when less skilled individuals, such as unqualified “dentists,” rely on outdated methods like rasping.

I have personally observed cases where the teeth of horses were significantly altered due to the lack of expertise in equine “dentistry.” The passage of this bill would undermine accountability and could potentially lead to the mistreatment of horses, putting their well-being at risk. Horses, as herbivores, require specific care to maintain their health, and a lack of proper expertise could have severe consequences.

Allowing unregulated practitioners to perform dental procedures could result in a regression to outdated practices, reminiscent of a time when the veterinary profession itself was less established. The risks of returning to such methods could be detrimental to the welfare of the animals.

Equine veterinarians are highly trained professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide the best possible care. The passage of this bill could lead to confusion among horse owners, who may mistakenly believe that the qualifications of unregulated “dentists” are comparable to those of licensed veterinarians.

For the sake of the horses and the integrity of equine care, I urge you to reject this bill. We must continue to move forward, ensuring that our practices reflect the most advanced and compassionate care for these animals.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I sincerely hope you will vote against this measure.