

February 20, 2025

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

I am Dr. Katy Wallace MS DVM, a mixed animal veterinarian from eastern Oregon. I do not support Senate Bill 976. On the surface this bill seems straightforward, simply to allow lay people to preg check cows (many already do) this is a potential financial benefit to ranchers and allow lay “trained” people to do equine dentistry. However, these are two vastly different skills, with wide reaching animal and human safety impacts.

To keep my comments as concise as possible:

- There is no standardized training, “degree”, or competency test for preg testing cattle.
- Preg checking is one step in monitoring for trichomoniasis. (a reportable disease in the state of Oregon that can cause devastating losses to the industry)
- The preg checking time is critical for maintaining a valid client patient relationship (VCPR). *A VCPR is required for veterinary prescribing of medications.
- Lastly, in the state of Oregon it is completely legal to preg check your own cattle, so ranchers can take a weekend class and preg check their own cattle.

Equine Dentistry is completely different.

- First there are many “schools” out there to “teach” lay people dental floating. However these programs have no standardized education; they range from complete online education to several months of classes and hands-on education. But there is no standardized testing for competency and safety.
- Secondly horse dentistry is a procedure that requires sedation. To safely administer sedation to a horse it is critical to know the health status of the horse. Does it have a heart condition? Does it have a fever? How old is the horse? Does it have Cushings Disease? Is the horse's mouth painful?
- Additionally, how are these lay people to legally get the drugs for sedation? Are these lay people going to be allowed DEA licenses? The drugs used for sedation are generally a combination of meds one of which is an opioid. With the opioid epidemic in our country is it responsible to allow “lay” people license to use these meds? Furthermore these drugs are under increasing scrutiny. Just this week the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) championed legislation reintroduced in Congress to help address the public health dangers of illicit xylazine while preserving its availability as an important drug for use in veterinary medicine.
(<https://www.avma.org/blog/xylazine-legislation-be-considered-new-congress>)
Because even these horse drugs are being used illicitly.
- Last point regarding the use of sedation for horses - When sedation is administered incorrectly it can result in horses flipping over or having seizures, this is a safety hazard for the horse and the people in the area. There are other adverse events that can happen as a result of sedation even when used correctly. Lay people are not trained or

skilled to handle these unforeseen complications, and when we are talking about animals as big as horses this is a safety issue not just for the horse but the bystanders as well.

- There are also concerns of a lay person not knowing about horse health and spreading disease between horses using instruments between horses - I have personally treated horses at a barn where a lay dentist went through and shared instruments from one horse's mouth to the next and spread equine influenza through an entire barn of horses.

Big picture here - there is nothing stopping ranchers from preg checking their own cattle, preg checking done by lay people provides no benefit to the industry, and even possibly does more damage in potentially allowing disease like trichomoniasis to get a step ahead. Equine dentistry is a medical procedure that for the safety of the horses and humans who care for them should be done by an educated and licensed individual with the knowledge of the drugs used for the procedure and the potential adverse events and how to handle those situations.

I believe that to stay true to the veterinary oath it is my duty to urge you to stop Bill 976 from going any further.

"Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.

I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence."

Thank you for your time and deep consideration of this issue. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Dr. Katy Wallace MS DVM
vetkaty@hotmail.com
503-680-9520
Burns, OR