



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES, INC

2011 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 11-31

TITLE: RURAL VETERINARY BOARD

WHEREAS: The proper handling, treatment and use of animals, particularly but not exclusively dogs are important features in our cultural/traditional lifestyle; and,

WHEREAS: There is a need for adequate and cost-effective veterinary services in rural Alaska; and.

WHEREAS: There is a need to develop and maintain a level of public education among rural Alaska residents as to the care of their animals and the prevention of accidents and disease; and,

WHEREAS: The lack of such veterinary services has created a public health issue that affects rural residents; and,

WHEREAS: The residents of rural Alaska need an organization to speak for them in seeking to have these needs met; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Delegates to the 2011 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc, that AFN support establishment of a Rural Alaska Veterinary Board in accordance with applicable laws.

SUBMITTED BY: NENANA NATIVE COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



Konrad Jackson

From: Sally Clampitt <rsclampitt@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2012 1:37 PM
To: Rep. Kurt Olson
Subject: HB0251

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To: Representative Kurt Olson, Chairman
Labor and Commerce, Finance Committee

From: Alaska Rural Veterinary Outreach

Dear Representative Olson:

The purpose of this email is to let you know that a new rural Alaska veterinary outreach nonprofit corporation is being formed to address the needs of domestic and companion animals in rural Alaska. We are very interested in any proposed legislation that would either positively or negatively affect this effort. I understand that the Labor and Commerce, Finance Committee is reviewing HB251, "An Act to relating to the Board of Veterinary Examiners and the practice of veterinary medicine". You will hold a teleconference hearing on Wednesday, 2/15, to entertain public input on this very important issue.

To our knowledge, there has never been an active state-wide organized or formal organization whose mission is to specifically reach out to rural Alaskan pet owners and their animals. I would like to make you aware of our organization:

- Alaska Rural Veterinary Outreach, (ARVO) will provide low-to-no-cost spay-neuter and basic veterinary services to rural Alaska where comparable, affordable resources are unavailable.
- As I write this, our organizational documents are being reviewed by an attorney, and will be filed with the state very soon. We will, of course, file for tax-exempt status.
- We expect to begin clinics this spring and summer, and feel ARVO will take a big step forward towards eliminating some of the tragic consequences that dogs and cats experience in rural Alaska.
- Our board consists of licensed Alaskan veterinarians experienced in rural spay-neuter operations, experienced animal welfare advocates, and experienced non-profit managers.
- Both individually and collectively, ARVO board members are all familiar with many requests from individuals in rural Alaskan communities asking for help to break the heartbreaking cycle of pet overpopulation, and we are strongly committed to providing that help. We recognize that spay-neuter is the best long-range permanent solution, together with education and support.
- We know that a number of skilled, licensed Alaskan veterinarians would like to participate in our rural program, and that it will not be necessary for us to utilize veterinarians from outside Alaska or the USA.
- We respect the need to adhere to the highest levels and standards of veterinary care, and look forward to complying with all applicable State of Alaska laws, rules and regulations.

It is not our intention to take a firm stand on HB251 at this time, either "for" or "against". But I do want you to know that we "exist" and are at the forefront of developing a unified effort to help this situation in rural Alaska. We understand Representative Dick's good intentions, and appreciate his willingness to step up to the plate. We also understand concerns from the Alaska Veterinary Medical Association about compromising veterinary standards, and do not want to see that happen. We believe that some sort of legislative support is appropriate, and that there is a real opportunity to develop legislative language that can accomplish both Rep. Dick's and AVMA's priorities. The need to

help Alaska's rural animals is very real. To that end, we would be glad to be of assistance to you in whatever way you might feel helpful.

Thank you very much for your time and effort on this important issue. If you have any questions or feel we can be of any help, please let me know.

Respectfully,

Sally Clampitt
Board Member
Alaska Rural Veterinary Outreach, Inc.
Telephone: (907) 346-1346



ALASKA FEDERATION
OF NATIVES

January 17, 2012

The Honorable Alan Dick
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Building
Juneau Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Dick,

The Alaska Federation of Natives supports House Bill 251. This past October the delegates to the 2011 Alaska Federation of Natives passed resolution 2011-31, which asks for the creation of an Alaska veterinary board with the due difference to rural Alaska.

We believe this bill creates some of the needed changes to address the lack of veterinary care in rural Alaska. There is need for veterinarians to serve the needs of rural Alaska as they are in short supply or nonexistent. The use of dogs for example as work animals creates many issues relating to public health, animal health and economic issues.

In order to mitigate this issue, the use of non-compensated veterinarians must be allowed as an option to all who live in the sparsely populated areas in the state. There are many places in the state that even a doctor is hard to find, the services of a veterinarian is nearly impossible to find.

We encourage the passage of HB 251 and look forward to a healthy discussion on veterinary care in rural Alaska and working towards a healthy Alaska.

Sincerely,

Adrian Lecornu

Vice President, AFN



DOYON
Limited®

11500 C Street, Suite 250
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In Anchorage: (907) 375-4220

January 25, 2012

Representative Alan Dick
State Capitol, Room 104
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subject: HB 251, Rural Veterinarian Care

Dear Representative Dick,

I write in support of House Bill 251, an act relating to rural veterinary care.

We all know too well the high cost of goods and services in rural Alaska. Veterinary care is not an exception. As a result, many rural residents are financially hindered in obtaining needed medical treatment for their animals.

HB 251 would:

1. Allow veterinarians to hold no-cost clinics, yet be compensated for actual expenses incurred along with nonmonetary donations (e.g. coffee, place to sleep).
2. Makes clear that veterinarians volunteering at events like the Iditarod do not need a permit from the Board of Veterinary Examiners.
3. Prescribes when and how complaints may be filed.

Doyon believes that there is a great need and that HB 251 will help alleviate that need. We hope the rest of the State legislature supports you and your efforts with HB 251.

Thank you, Representative Dick, for developing what appears to be a simple, targeted, and responsible approach to a very real problem faced by many rural Alaskan households.

We wish you well this legislative session with this bill and other initiatives on behalf of the Alaskan people. Please feel free to call on us if we can ever be of service.

Sincerely,

Aaron Schutt
President and CEO

Representative Alan Dick
Alaska State Capitol, Room 104
Juneau, Alaska 99801

January 23, 2011

Dear Representative Dick:

Thank you for sponsoring HB 251, relating to the pro bono practice of veterinary medicine. Timothy A. Hunt, DVM, supports this legislation because it will remove impediments to volunteer veterinary organizations which have sought to provide services in rural Alaska.

Rural Alaskans depend on their animals as part of their lifestyle. A pro bono spay/neuter clinic is a huge service to their communities and the overall welfare of the animals. The need for low cost and pro bono veterinary services in rural Alaska is very large and currently the veterinary services offered are nearly non existent. I believe this needs to be addressed by the veterinary community and much could be done to improve the situation in many villages and towns throughout Alaska.

Some of the highlights of HB 251 include:

- HB 251 makes clear that a person may volunteer veterinarian services and receive coffee, housing and other nonmonetary compensation without needing to be permitted by the Board. (Eg. Iditarod volunteer vets, Religious volunteers, other volunteers)
- Volunteers are not immune from legal action resulting from gross negligence, reckless or intentional misconduct while volunteering services.
- HB 251 offers Alaskans who need a choice, just that, a choice. They can find veterinarians who are willing to come to their communities and provide badly needed services without worrying that providing a cup of tea and a gym floor to sleep on will run afoul of the State's oversight.

I believe the veterinarian's professional responsibility is an important one but shouldn't be compromised in such a way as to put them in conflict of the law. On that note, the law should not interfere to the point where a veterinarian cannot exercise their expertise in a way to benefit an animals' welfare and, thus, the welfare of the animals' caretaker. This bill would allow for veterinarians to be better able to service the rural communities.

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Hunt, DVM
2361 US 41 South

*Marquette, Michigan
49855
906-249-5667
Licensed Alaska Veterinarian*

RECD JAN 30 2012

Representative Alan Dick
Alaska State Capitol, Room 104
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Dick:

Thank you for sponsoring HB 251, relating to the pro bono practice of veterinary medicine. Loving Companions Animal Rescue, Inc., supports this legislation because it will remove impediments to volunteer veterinary organizations which have sought to provide services in rural Alaska.

Many rural Alaskans depend on their animals as part of their lifestyle. They supplement dog food with fish and other local proteins. A pro bono spay/neuter clinic is a huge service to their communities. The need for low cost and pro bono veterinary services in rural Alaska is huge.

HB 251:

- HB 251 makes clear that a person may volunteer veterinarian services and receive coffee, housing and other nonmonetary compensation without needing to be permitted by the Board. (Eg. Iditarod volunteer vets, Religious volunteers, other volunteers)
- Volunteers are not immune from legal action resulting from gross negligence, reckless or intentional misconduct while volunteering services.
- HB 251 offers Alaskans who need a choice, just that, a choice. They can find veterinarians who are willing to come to their communities and provide badly needed services without worrying that providing a cup of tea and a gym floor to sleep on will run afoul of the State's oversight.
- Uses the example of the Medical Board statutes (AS 08.64.326-331) to clarify that the Board of Veterinary Medicine may not base a finding of "professional incompetence", etc., solely on unconventional/experimental treatments in the absence of harm to the animal.
- Sets out the complaint process.

Complaints may only be filed:

- by persons who own/are responsible for the animal seen by the Veterinarian.

- Against a licensee who treated the animal

Complaints must:

- Include documentation of the alleged mistreatment
- Be made under oath
- Filed within six months of the date of the act or omission
- Be sent to the subject of the complaint/allegation

During the Investigation the Department:

- Shall interview, under oath, the complainant, the licensee, any technician or assistant to the veterinarian;
- Determine whether the complainant followed aftercare procedures
- Include in its report all relevant information

Board members within five miles of a licensee's principal place of business may not participate in a disciplinary hearing relating to that licensee.

Sincerely,

Donna K. Buck-Davis
Donna K. Buck-Davis
Loving Companions Animal Rescue, Inc.
1360 Old Richardson Hwy
North Pole, AK 99705

cc: *Local Legislators*