



HB 184 Highlights

“An Act exempting veterinarians from the requirements of the controlled substance prescription database.”

- Exempts veterinarians from the prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) database. *Veterinarians are concerned about the opiate epidemic and are doing their part, but the PDMP is grossly inappropriate for veterinary use. 37 other states have already exempted veterinarians.*
- Veterinary prescription of controlled substances accounts for **0.34%** of all controlled substance prescriptions in the United States. *The PDMP is akin to using a nuclear bomb to catch a mouse when a mousetrap would do.*
- Animals do not have unique identifiers such as Social Security Numbers, or verifiable date of birth as human patients do. This fact makes the PDMP unusable for veterinarians. *PDMP rules are unclear as to who to query and who to enter prescription data under. Is it the dog? The husband? The wife? Both? The neighbor who brought the dog in? The State says it's about who has access to the drugs, so should **all** these people have their private health data exposed to a veterinary staff member to treat **one** animal patient? And should these people have their PDMP scores altered because of one animal patient? When a minor child gets a prescription, the child's PDMP score changes – the score doesn't change for **EVERYONE** in the household who has access.*
- Veterinarians are currently required to query the **human** owner's **private** medical prescription history before prescribing controlled substances for the **animal** patient. *Veterinarians are not trained to assess human prescription information, nor use that information to make informed decisions on how to treat or not treat their animal patients. This invasion of human privacy is overbroad for the treatment of animal patients.*
- Each time a veterinary prescription is entered into the PDMP database, that **animal** prescription changes the PDMP risk assessment score for the associated **human**. *The human(s) associated with the animal receiving a controlled substance has their PDMP scores changed by the mere fact their pet received a prescription. Human physicians are not trained to assess medications prescribed for animal patients. Blurring the human and animal database results in unusable data that may detrimentally affect human health care.*
- Alaska has a tramadol problem, with 1.5 million tablets brought into Alaska last year. The DEA states that this represents 20% of the tramadol in the United States. Tramadol is an **FDA human-labeled product** with limited veterinary application. No evidence implicates veterinarians in this problem. *Tramadol made veterinary news in 2017 with Dallas Seavey's sled dogs; however, Tramadol is a drug labeled for human use. Veterinarians believe that someone intentionally gave Seavey's dogs tramadol to decrease their athletic performance.*
- When veterinarians order any controlled substance through lawful means, the DEA has record of that purchase. The PDMP provides **no** additional information about the veterinarian's supply. If, in the extremely unlikely event that a veterinarian would obtain controlled substances through unlawful means, the PDMP would not be effective, as the veterinarian is not likely to use the PDMP to distribute unlawfully obtained medications.
- Alaska has a shortage of veterinarians and Alaska already has the highest licensing fees in the nation. Investigating veterinarians who didn't use an **unusable** PDMP is a waste of money and will only serve to increase the licensing fees due to increased fees for investigation. Increasing licensing fees will deter veterinarians from practicing in Alaska.