

Konrad Jackson

From: Jon Basler [JBaslerDVM@gci.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 7:18 AM
To: Rep. Kurt Olson
Cc: Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Bob Miller
Subject: House Bill 139, Opposed to Passage.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Representative Olson and Members of the Labor and Commerce Committee:

I wish to express my disapproval / opposition to House Bill 139.

I have been an Alaskan resident and a practicing veterinarian since 1985. I have operated a veterinary clinic in Anchorage since 1998 which has had to recruit veterinarians from both inside and outside of the State of Alaska. I also the perspective of working for three years in Rural Alaska as a Veterinarian / Public Health Officer for the North Slope Borough's Public Health Office / Veterinary Clinic and travelled to each village in the Borough to provide veterinary services up to three times yearly.

One of the primary purposes of the Veterinary Practice act is to ensure the qualification of individuals who are licensed to practice veterinary medicine in order to protect the public. Veterinary medicine is a highly technical field with a rapidly growing knowledge base which takes multiple years of education and dedication to become competent at. The public expects a level of care which matches that which they experience at their own physicians offices and at hospitals. The AVMA has well established national accreditation standards which are not designed as a barrier of entry to the field but to ensure that every graduating veterinarian has the skills necessary to successfully practice veterinary medicine.

HB 139 is dangerously written legislation which removes a nationally recognized certification process designed to ensure veterinary competence and replaces it with ambiguously worded language leaving the decision to a narrow group of individuals on the board of examiners without providing any guidance on who or what is an acceptable process to ensure veterinary competence. It creates ambiguity, not clarity and creates a potential open door which could have unintended consequences.

HB 139 is ambiguous and disingenuous at best and creates potentially dangerous liability at worst. It will have minimal affect on its stated goal of increasing veterinary services to rural Alaska. I urge you to not support progression of this bill.

Respectfully yours,