

**A Resolution Opposing AAVSB Endorsement of
the Veterinary Professional Associate (VPA) / Mid-Level Practitioner Position/**

WHEREAS, the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) exists to promote consistency, public protection, and regulatory excellence in veterinary medicine across its 63 Member Board jurisdictions, including all of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the ten Canadian provinces;

WHEREAS, the AAVSB proposed at the 2025 Executive Directors and Registrars Summit drafting a model document relating to the establishment of a Veterinary Professional Associate (VPA) or mid-level practitioner position, a newly created mid-level role authorized by public referendum, Proposition 129, in the State of Colorado;

WHEREAS, the concept of the Veterinary Professional Associate originated in Colorado as a response to perceived veterinary shortages, particularly believed to exist in rural and underserved areas;

WHEREAS, despite opposition from the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association and concerns raised by regulatory boards and practicing veterinarians across the country, the VPA role was established by Colorado and is vested with the authority to engage in certain conduct previously reserved for licensed veterinarians in Colorado;

WHEREAS, the referendum bypassed the traditional stakeholder-driven legislative process typically used to amend professional practice acts, resulting in a statutory directive that the Colorado State Board of Veterinary Medicine implement a licensure program for VPAs—even as the broader profession and most regulatory boards nationwide remained unconvinced of the need, safety, or benefits of such a role;

WHEREAS, the concerns about perceived veterinary shortages were overblown and any such shortages will be ameliorated following the construction and completion of the twelve veterinary schools currently scheduled for completion in the next several years, which will add between 300 and 500 veterinarian graduates to the workforce in the next three to five years;

WHEREAS, the VPA position is not currently supported by a nationally standardized or accredited educational curriculum, nor does there exist a regulatory infrastructure capable of ensuring consistent oversight or protecting public safety across jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, leading organizations within the profession, including the AVMA,¹ NAVTA,² AAHA,³ AAEP,⁴ ABVP,⁵ AASV,⁶ SAVMA,⁷ RVMA,⁸ FelineVMA,⁹ state VMAs, and others have raised serious concerns that the VPA role presents unacceptable risks to animal welfare, undermines regulatory clarity, and introduces confusion in the delegation of veterinary responsibilities;

WHEREAS, the introduction of the VPA position in other jurisdictions could erode the integrity and defined scope of practice of existing mid-level professionals, such as Certified, Licensed, and Registered Veterinary Technicians (CVTs, LVTs, and RVTs), and NAVTA certified veterinary specialists, many of whom are already credentialed, regulated, and integrated into veterinary teams nationwide;

WHEREAS, other Member Board jurisdictions have determined that the current framework of veterinary care—centered on veterinarians and well-trained veterinary technicians and assistants—adequately supports public health and animal welfare;

WHEREAS, there is not yet consensus within the profession, national professional associations, or among regulatory boards that a mid-level practitioner role like the VPA is necessary, beneficial, or safe for broad implementation;

WHEREAS, despite surveying a national subset of licensees, the AAVSB has not polled its Member Board jurisdictions regarding their interest in endorsing the VPA through the creation of such

¹ The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has expressed its concerns in a September 2024 article, which is available at <https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/AVMA-MLP-Concerns-September-2024.pdf>.

² The National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) has said that it “will not be prioritizing the development of any ‘mid-level practitioner’ or ‘veterinary professional associate’ positions before these other critical issues are addressed” in a statement available at <https://navta.net/news/reiterating-navtas-priorities/>.

³ The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) has said that it “firmly believes that focusing on the advancement and utilization of credentialed veterinary technicians, rather than introducing a new tier of midlevel practitioners, is the most effective way to simplify the journey toward excellence for veterinary practices.” See AAHA’s Position Statement on Midlevel Practitioner, available at <https://www.aaha.org/about-aaha/aaha-position-statements/>.

⁴ The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) has said it “does not support the establishment of the mid-level professional at this time, as we do not believe it serves the best interest of our patients, clients, or the public.” See AARP’s Position on the Establishment of the Mid-Level Professional, available at <https://aaep.org/resource/aaep-statement-on-the-establishment-of-the-mid-level-professional/>.

⁵ The American Board of Veterinary Practitioners (ABVP) has issued a statement opposing creation of a midlevel position <https://www.avma.org/blog/veterinary-groups-say-no-midlevel-practitioner-position>.

⁶ The American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV) has said, “The AASV does not support the creation of a mid-level veterinary professional.” See AASV Position Statement: Mid-level Veterinary Professional, available at <https://www.aasv.org/position-statements/position-mid-level-veterinary-professional/>.

⁷ The Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA) has not published its own position statement, but has joined the AVMA’s statement.

⁸ The Relief Veterinary Medical Association (RVMA) provided its statement at <https://reliefvma.org/the-relief-vma-is-against-colorado-proposition-129-and-for-veterinary-technician-elevation-and-pet-safety/>.

⁹ The Feline Veterinary Medical Association (FelineVMA) opposes the creation of a Midlevel Veterinary Practitioner. See Position statement, available at <https://catvets.com/resource/midlevel-practitioner/>.

model documents as are currently proposed by the AAVSB, and there is not yet consensus within the profession or among regulatory boards that a mid-level practitioner role like the VPA is necessary, beneficial, or safe for broad implementation;

WHEREAS, the AAVSB has recommended a course of action that deviates from the Policies & Procedures: Model Document Creation, Review, and Voting by Member Boards (the “Policy”), in which the Board of Directors has instructed the Regulatory Policy Committee and the AAVSB to adhere to that policy for Member Boards to review and vote on new and updated model documents;

WHEREAS, the Policy represents a careful and thoughtful method to consider the adoption of model documents, and includes significant research, period of review and commentary, and departure from that Policy is neither warranted nor appropriate;

WHEREAS, the creation of a model document concerning the VPA will give the strong and wrong impression that the AAVSB’s constituent members—the regulatory bodies of each Member Board jurisdiction—support the creation of the VPA in those jurisdictions;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the AAVSB shall not endorse the creation of the Veterinary Professional Associate position;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAVSB shall refrain from endorsing the VPA position unless and until:

- (a) a nationally accredited educational and credentialing framework has been established;
- (b) sufficient regulatory infrastructure has been developed to oversee the role among the AAVSB’s Member Board jurisdictions should those jurisdictions determine there is need for such position; and
- (c) broad consensus among Member Board jurisdictions supports the role as necessary, effective, and protective of public and animal interests;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAVSB shall focus its efforts on strengthening and harmonizing recognition and utilization of existing credentialed veterinary technicians (CVTs, LVTs, and RVTs), particularly in jurisdictions where such roles are not yet formally recognized;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that nothing in this resolution shall mean nor be construed to mean that the AAVSB is not empowered to assist the stakeholders in Colorado in their implementation of a VPA and that the AAVSB shall, in fact, provide customary resources and aid to that jurisdiction consistent with the purpose and mission of the AAVSB;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any model documents centered on the VPA shall adhere to the AAVSB's Policies & Procedures: Model Document Creation, Review, and Voting by Member Boards;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be published on the AAVSB website and in tandem published with any approved Model Document;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAVSB shall annually publish current numbers of veterinarians, CVTs/LVTs/RVTs, and VPAs licensed in each Member Board jurisdiction on a consolidated webpage for public access to help build public confidence regarding the availability of care resources in Member Board jurisdictions;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAVSB shall first work with its Members—and not outside interest groups—regarding the VPA and VPA-related issues within the will of the majority of those Member Board jurisdictions; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the AAVSB shall adopt a cautious, evidence-based, and professionally collaborative approach when considering any expansion or restructuring of veterinary roles, ensuring the continued protection of the public, the profession, and animal welfare guided by the will of its Member Board jurisdictions.