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Sent: Monday, March 27, 2023 11:58 AM
To: AGR-KBVE (AGR)
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HB 167 signed by Governor



KBVE Chairman Steven J. Wills, DVM, KBVE Executive Director Mrs. Michelle Shane, bill sponsor Representative Matt Koch (72nd District), and KVMA Governmental Relations Chair Dr. Jim Weber (not pictured) testify before the House L&O Committee on February 15, 2023.

Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners applauds passage of Practice Act Modernization

FRANKFORT (March 27, 2023) – A bill that modernizes veterinarian licensure in Kentucky is being applauded by [Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners](#) (KBVE) Chairman Steven J. Wills, DVM, and [Members of the Board](#).

[House Bill 167](#) (HB 167) updates and creates new sections of KRS Chapter 321, the statutory chapter creating the KBVE and mandating licensure for the professions of veterinary medicine, ensuring public protection for animal owners across the commonwealth.

“The passage of the [Kentucky Veterinary Medicine Practice Act](#) Modernization bill was the result of a remarkable collaborative effort,” said Chairman Wills, DVM. “HB 167 elevates the practice of veterinary medicine in the commonwealth, while offering more protections for citizens.”

“HB 167 is the result of the KBVE and KVMA working in partnership to benefit the veterinarian community and citizens of the commonwealth,” said bill sponsor Representative Matt Koch. “These organizations worked to ensure that every veterinarian had the opportunity to have his or her voice heard. They brought together key stakeholders to make this bill right for Kentucky. Everyone did a fantastic job collaborating on this effort, and I’m happy that we were able to get HB 167 across the finish line.”

HB 167 incorporates a number of critical updates to KRS Chapter 321, including:

- Establishing a framework for the safe and effective use of telehealth in veterinary medicine
- Reinforcing the existing requirements to establish a veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR) in person
- Creating a veterinary facility registration and a voluntary inspection program by 2025
- Instituting strong title protections for licensed veterinary technicians (LVTs)
- Implementing a new credential for allied animal health professionals working in animal chiropractic
- Providing expanded definitions for a common language among stakeholders
- Establishing an educational awards program to incentivize new graduates to work in rural areas and food animal species
- Requiring criminal background checks on new applicants
- Requiring minimum standards for medical records and veterinary facilities
- Increasing board authority over those in violation of the Practice Act and those offering veterinary services without a board credential

“Veterinarians across the state, including large-animal vets that service our agricultural herds and flocks, play a key role in keeping our animals healthy,” said Commissioner Quarles. “Making sure the statutes that guide KBVE in its role is up-to-date is important for the public health and protection.”

“With gratitude, we thank bill sponsor Rep. Matt Koch, and Sen. Jason Howell for carrying this bill,” stated Chairman Wills, DVM. “We thank the Kentucky Veterinary Medicine Association (KVMA) leadership for working with us to make this legislation right for Kentucky. We extend thanks to Commissioner Ryan Quarles for the partnership between the KBVE and the Department of Agriculture, including administrative resources and support to the board. Finally, all of this could not be accomplished without the leadership of our executive director, Michelle Shane, who provided guidance and direction to the board in crafting this legislative package.”

Prior to this year’s bill, the Kentucky Veterinary Medicine Practice Act had not been updated for more than 30 years. HB 167 was the culmination of two years of research including in-depth review of two national Practice Act Models and existing laws in key states. KBVE consulted with the KVMA, the Kentucky Veterinary Technician Association (KVTA), and other key stakeholders throughout 2022, hosting 15 stakeholder meetings, both regional and species specific. The compiled feedback was used to refine the proposed draft, providing a comprehensive piece of legislation that better protects consumers and provides members of the profession transparent frameworks in which to conduct business.

Dr. James Weber, KVMA Governmental Relations Chair, also praised the bill’s passage. “Many thanks to Rep. Koch for being the primary sponsor of HB 167. Thank you also to the General Assembly and the many animal health related groups for understanding the need for

changes and then helping to rewrite the Veterinary Practice Act. These updates will aid in addressing the veterinary practitioner shortage in Kentucky.”

During the Senate Agriculture Committee hearing President Pro Tempore Senator David Givens stated, “Thank you for engaging all the stakeholders. This is the way legislation is supposed to be done. It’s not easy, but it’s important. So, thank you.”

Individuals interested in collaborating with KBVE on the development of administrative regulations related to the Kentucky Veterinary Medicine Practice Act should reach out to the board at Vet@ky.gov or 502-782-0273.

Kentucky Board of Veterinary Examiners

Contact us at Vet@ky.gov or 502-782-0273

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