

# 2022 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



**T**he 2022 Legislative cycle is well underway, with bills currently being heard in policy committees at the Capitol. Out of those hundreds of bills, the CVMA legislative team flagged approximately 25 of them as being potentially impactful to veterinary medicine, animal health and welfare, and/or employer-employee relations. Ultimately, after several levels of review and discussion, the CVMA Board of Governors took official positions on all of those bills at its April 2 meeting.

While the CVMA legislative team is following all bills closely, a few bills rise to a priority level due to their subject matter. Below are summaries of critical bills being addressed by the CVMA.

### **AB 2606 (Carrillo) Cats: declawing procedures: prohibition** **CVMA Position: Oppose**

This bill would restrict veterinarians from performing a declawing procedure on cats unless it is being performed for a therapeutic purpose. The bill would impose a civil penalty that increases for each violation when a declawing procedure is performed. While not expressly written into this bill, the law—if enacted—would also subject veterinarians to regulatory enforcement by the Veterinary Medical Board, as it would create a legal prohibition of a veterinary medical procedure.

The CVMA opposes this bill because it would outlaw a procedure falling within the scope of veterinary medical practice. While the CVMA institutionally discourages the use of declawing as an elective procedure and supports non-surgical alternatives, the CVMA works to preserve the profession's right to govern itself, and believes that veterinarians must be permitted to interact with clients and patients on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the best individual decisions are made in a given situation.

This bill was recently heard in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on April 26. The CVMA submitted an opposition letter and testified alongside the Veterinary Medical Board in opposition to the bill. The bill passed the committee and will now go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The CVMA will continue to fight for the interests of the veterinary profession as this bill continues through the legislative process.

### **AB 1881 (Santiago) Animal welfare: Dog and Cat Bill of Rights** **CVMA Position: Neutral, as amended**

In its original format, this bill presented a number of issues for the CVMA due to the legal implications of its statements. While the intentions of the bill are ostensibly to educate the public about the obligations of pet ownership, there were several statements in the original bill that caused the CVMA concern. One example included use of the term “guardian” in reference to pet ownership. This term carries legal implications that invite litigation regarding non-economic damages and third-party representation of pets in legal proceedings. Additionally, the bill listed a number of dog and cat “rights”—such as the right “to a life of comfort, free of fear and anxiety”—that stakeholders felt impossible to achieve.

The CVMA joined a coalition with the Animal Health Institute and the American Kennel Club and signed onto two comment letters that suggested amendments to AB 1881 addressing the unintended legal consequences referenced above. The bill was amended in the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on April 26 to remove the term “guardian” and also added more aspirational (but non-binding) language to declare what animals “deserve.”

This bill will next go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

### **CVMA Legislative Action Center**

For specific information on bills or to track CVMA-monitored bills through the legislative process, visit the CVMA's online Legislative Action Center. CVMA members can login to the site for detailed information on each bill.

### **AB 1885 (Kalra) Cannabis and cannabis products: animals: veterinary medicine**

#### **CVMA Position: Support**

Current law permits veterinarians to discuss with clients the use of medicinal cannabis for animal patients but prohibits cannabis recommendation. Over the past two years, unsuccessful attempts were made in the form of AB 384 (Kalra) and SB 627 (Galgiani) to permit veterinarians to recommend cannabis.

This year, Assemblymember Ash Kalra submitted AB 1885 in another attempt to permit cannabis recommendation by veterinarians. The CVMA has a strong working relationship with Mr. Kalra and his staff and is grateful that they recognize that veterinarians need to have complete and effective conversations with clients about cannabis. Permitting cannabis recommendation to clients will help to legally enable the profession to do so.

This bill passed the Assembly Business and Professions Committee on April 19. The CVMA submitted a letter in support of the bill to all committee members and CVMA lobbyists testified in support of the bill during the meeting. It will now go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

### **AB 2764 (Nazarian/Lee) Animals: commercial animal feeding operations and slaughterhouses**

#### **CVMA Position: Pending neutral, if amended**

In its original format, this bill would have prohibited the development or expansion of commercial animal feeding operations and slaughterhouses in California, including the addition of new businesses. This includes feedlots, broiler farms, aquatic farms, and other commercial agriculture production operations that sell animal-based products or byproducts.

The CVMA was opposed to this bill due to its impact on food production in the state, among other reasons. The CVMA submitted an opposition letter to the authors early on in the legislative cycle. Due to the significant opposition expressed by several agriculture lobbying groups as well as the CVMA, the authors are currently working with legislative consultants to incorporate a number of amendments into the bill. If those amendments are incorporated, the CVMA will be able to lift its opposition.

This bill is pending hearing in the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

See chart on page 12 for CVMA positions on all legislation currently being monitored by the CVMA. ■

### **2022 LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR**

January 3	Legislature reconvenes
January 10	Deadline for Governor to submit budget
February 18	Last day for bills to be introduced
May 27	Last day for bills to pass out of house of origin
July 1	Last day for policy committees to meet and hear bills
August 25	Last day to amend bills on the Floor (general session)
August 31	Last day for each house to pass bills
September 30	Last day for Governor to sign or veto legislation

# Legislation to Watch



## PRIORITY BILLS

Bill #	Author	Title	CVMA Position
AB 1885	Kalra	Cannabis and cannabis products: animals: vet medicine	Support
AB 2606	Carrillo	Cats: declawing procedures: prohibition	Oppose
AB 1881	Santiago	Animal welfare: Dog and Cat Bill of Rights	Neutral, if Amended
AB 2764	Nazarian	Animals: commercial feeding operations slaughterhouses	Pending Watch, if Amended

## OTHER BILLS

Bill #	Author	Title	CVMA Position
AB 646	Low	DCA: boards: expunged convictions	Approve
AB 1648	Maienschein	Disaster preparedness: animal wildfire evacuation plan	Watch, Seek Information
AB 1781	Rubio	Safe transportation of dogs and cats	Approve, If Amended
AB 1901	Nazarian	Dog training services and facilities: requirements	Watch
AB 2055	Low	Controlled substances: CURES database	Watch
AB 2723	Holden	Animals: microchips: theft	Watch, Work With Author
AB 2785	Friedman	Emotional support animals – spot bill	Watch
AB 2932	Low/Garcia	Four-day workweek – spot bill	Watch
AB 2948	Cooper	Consumer protection: DCA: complaints	Watch
SB 879	Wiener	Toxicological testing on dogs and cats	Watch Closely
SB 1009	Borgeas	Division of community property: pet animals	Watch
SB 1029	Hurtado	One Health program: zoonotic diseases	Support
SB 1031	Ochoa Bogh	Healing arts boards: inactive license fees	Disapprove
SB 1310	Leyva	Professions and vocations: consumer complaints	Watch
SB 1365	Jones	Licensing boards: procedures	Watch
SB 1417	Borgeas	Dogs: licenses: issuance	Watch
SB 1462	Bradford	Processed pet food: designation as human food grade	Disapprove