

Sen. Dan Kerschen
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
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VIA EMAIL

February 10, 2019

Chairman Kerschen and members of the committee,

The Wichita Veterinary Medical Association writes in support of Senate Bill 117. The WVMA is a professional organization representing over 100 practicing veterinarians in the Wichita, KS and surrounding areas. Our practices are governed by the Kansas Veterinary Practice Act, or Article 8 or the chapter in which SB 117 amends.

Although our membership is unaware if this specific disease transmission section (K.S.A. §47-624) has ever been enforced against a private practice clinic, the wording certainly targets the life saving work our veterinarians do every day, specifically: any person who has in such person's possession any domestic animal affected with any contagious or infectious disease, knowing such animal to be so affected, may incur a civil penalty . . . if such person: (2) keeps such animal where other domestic animals, not affected with or previously exposed to such disease, may be exposed to such contagious or infectious disease.

Any contagious or infectious disease that affects domestic animals is an exhaustive list, and prohibiting anyone, including veterinarians, from keeping animals where other animals are not affected wholly prevents the practice of veterinary medicine in our state. By design, veterinary clinics need to have the ability to assess sick patients on an appointment basis and hospitalize and treat patients that have contagious or infectious diseases. While veterinary clinics practice biosecurity measures; ensuring that no other patient in the hospital may be exposed is not possible for the average private veterinary practice.

We were completely unaware of this seemingly outdated state law, but because this was enforced against a Wichita-based veterinary premise this summer, we fear that if the statute is not changed, there is nothing that prevents it from being enforced against our member veterinarians.

The WVMA supports the changes in SB 117, and agrees that disease disclosure to a new owner or adopter is an important section.

We support SB 117 and urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,
Wichita Veterinary Medical Association
Mark Ekerberg, President
Rebecca Linot, Treasurer