



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 29, 2023

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: SB 390 (3rd) -Provision of Veterinary Services – Routine Medical Care and Rabies Vaccines – Letter of Support as Amended

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) submits this Letter of Support as amended for Senate Bill (SB) 390 (3rd) - Provision of Veterinary Services - Routine Medical Care and Rabies Vaccines. SB 390 will require the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners to establish a process to authorize certain veterinary practitioners licensed to practice veterinary medicine in another state or jurisdiction to become licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the State. SB 390 would also require the Secretary of Health to allow certain individuals to administer rabies vaccines under certain circumstances.

Procedural guidelines for the administration of rabies vaccine in Maryland follow national standards published in the Compendium of Animal Rabies Prevention and Control by the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians (the Compendium).¹ The recommendations in the Compendium serve as a basis for animal rabies prevention and control programs throughout the United States and facilitate standardization of procedures among jurisdictions, thereby contributing to an effective national rabies control program.

The Compendium states that in most circumstances, the rabies vaccine should be administered by or under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian on premises. However, the Compendium makes an allowance for administering rabies vaccine to animals in a shelter setting, understanding the importance of vaccinating these animals, while acknowledging shelters may not have a licensed veterinarian on site. To ensure vaccination, the Compendium states the rabies vaccine may be administered under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian to animals held in animal shelters, be it through direct or indirect supervision (i.e., a licensed veterinarian is responsible for ensuring proper administration of the vaccine while not being on-site).

¹ Public Veterinary Medicine: Public Health - NASPHV. (n.d.). Retrieved January 31, 2023, from <http://www.nasphv.org/Documents/NASPHVRabiesCompendium.pdf>

MDH recognizes that the administration of rabies vaccine to shelter animals is a critical component in the strategy to reduce rabies in Maryland and supports efforts to expand the number of trained individuals that can administer the rabies vaccine in a shelter environment.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary