

H B 1388
FAV

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Distinguished Senators,

I am humbly and gratefully asking you to support HB-1388 to prohibit non-compete agreements in both health care and veterinary practice.

My husband Jerrell Carr is a retired Maryland State Trooper and I am a 20 year civil servant with the federal government. I have called Maryland home my entire life and we have raised our two daughters Adrianna (15) and Ziva (11) in Calvert County. Our daughters began their equestrian enthusiasm at the tender age of four and three years old respectfully. Jerrell and I have never ridden a horse a day in our lives, and in fact I have a fear of these gentle giants. But despite Adrianna being highly allergic and Ziva being fiercely competitive keeping up with her sister we entered the equestrian world and have been "all in" for ten years. Jerrell and I do not come from wealthy backgrounds but we feel our girls have once in a lifetime talent, so as parents we have made a way for them to pursue their dreams. They both aspire to ride for an NCAA Division 1 team in college.

In 2021, we purchased our first horse, a grey Dutch Warmblood named Gotham. We quickly learned that a performance horse requires performance level care. To keep an equine athlete like Gotham in peak shape they must stay healthy, maintain excellent nutrition, and have regular access to peak medical care by vets trained in performance horses. After extensive research we met Dr. CJ Caniglia and Dr. Brittany Williamson who were affiliated with Wolf Creek Equine Hospital. What a bonus that Dr. CJ and Dr. B are also married and located within minutes of the farm where we board our horses. Dr. CJ and Dr. B have vested their careers into the care of performance ponies and horses, as well as cutting edge surgical experience in some of the toughest and most challenging equine health conditions. In April 2023, Dr. CJ was able to swiftly and effectively care for Gotham when he coliced at a local competition. For the non-horse person like me, colic is when a horses intestinal tract can twist for a number of reasons. Without prompt and precise medical care, Colic can be fatal within hours. Dr. CJ was able to pinpoint possible culprits and return Gotham to peak performance.

In May 2023, we were faced with another equine emergency when our beloved pony Penny was found in distress in her field. We quickly rushed Penny to Dr. CJ at Wolf Creek and within minutes of arriving, he performed a complicated but successful surgery removing a large tumor and resectioning Penny's intestinal tract. Dr. CJ was the only equine surgeon with the skills to perform this delicate and risky

surgery, given Penny's golden age of 19 years old. For three months Dr. CJ treated Penny with specialized care until she was able to return to the ring. Dr. CJ was also right by Penny's side when an unrelated tragic incident resulted in her passing. Dr. CJ's compassion during Penny's treatment, recovery, and passing was felt and seen, and from that moment Dr. CJ would forever be part of our family.

In August 2023, following Penny's death, we acquired a second horse named Prima. She is an eight year old Dutch Warmblood with a successful start in her young competitive years. Prima is also a performance horse with the potential to compete in shows that Division I colleges recruit from. Without hesitation we had Dr. CJ and Dr. B begin Prima's performance horse care. With Prima's transition to a new home, she developed an stress-related illness that required their specialized care. Dr. B placed Prima on a regiment of medicines to both treat and prevent recurrence, which could have been fatal if not properly treated. In November 2023, we learned that Dr. CJ and Dr. B were leaving Wolf Creek Equine Hospital to begin their own performance horse practice. Without hesitation we asked to maintain our vet relationship with Dr. CJ and Dr. B, given they have been the only vets to care for our animals. Unfortunately, we also learned that a non-compete agreement signed between Dr. CJ and Dr. B and their prior employer, Wolf Creek Equine, prevented us from continuing under their care. This news came as a shock and surprise. We had never used the only remaining vet at Wolf Creek, and that vet to date does not offer the services needed for our horses. No less than two weeks later our horse Prima casted herself in her stall. Again, for the non-horse person like me, this is when a horse lays down in their stall and gets stuck in a corner. The horse begins to panic and kicks, twists, and turns in an effort to roll themselves over and stand up. Despite their impressive size, horses are incredibly fragile. In Prima's attempt to un wedge herself in the middle of the night when this occurred, she sustained extensive injuries to her face, ears, legs, and stomach. Prima looked like she went 12 rounds in a boxing match. Due to a simple signature on a piece of paper, the two vets we've entrusted with Prima's care were unable to provide emergency medical service despite them being less than five miles from Prima. Our trainer was able to locate a vet that provided treatment as best as possible, but they lacked the specialized tools that a performance horse vet keeps in their mobile vet trucks so the extent of her injuries was unknown. Again, we were unable to seek the speciality care that Prima required due to a piece of paper. Wolf Creek Equine no longer has the specialists, availability, or expertise to treat our animals and due to a two year non-compete, the only ones suffering are the animals. Vets are a diminishing profession, and finding an equine vet when minutes matter and hours count is becoming impossible. And to add insult to injury, there are vets available, willing, able, and ready to fulfill their "duty to care" but are restricted based on a piece of paper. While we were absolutely grateful for the care provided to Prima by the vet we found in the moment, her recovery has been hindered. Key tests could not be performed and her

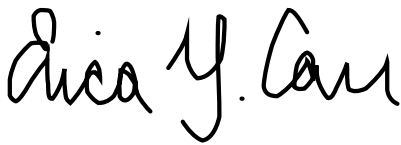
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wounds became infected and her treatment prolonged. Instead of Prima's vets driving five miles to treat her, we had to load her on a trailer and take her 100 miles away where Dr. CJ could care for her and not violate his non-compete agreement. Prima is expected to recover as best as possible but her story is not unique and the reality of a similar accident or medical condition happening is frankly terrifying. Our barn consists of over 40 performance horses all with unique needs to perform at their very best. These horses and ponies have all been patients of Dr. CJ and Dr. B for years and have never been treated by any other local vet, because the services these animals need are not offered.

Ironically, during the course of HB 1388 coming to fruition, I learned my family was adversely impacted by a medical non-compete agreement. My niece, Amanda Shay Wilkins, was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer at the age of 33 years old. Amanda was a OB/GYN nurse and a U.S. Air Force spouse and Maryland native. During the course of Amanda's final weeks of life, a medical non-compete kept her oncologist from being by her side and providing end of life care. The doctor that held her hand during her diagnosis, was not allowed to hold her hand as she took her last breath...all because of a no-compete agreement precluding her doctor from tending to her at Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis.

I am humbly and gratefully asking that you vote in favor of HB-1388 releasing doctors and vets from non-compete agreements so they can fulfill their duty of care. Patients deserve to be cared for by the doctors and vets that they chose.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erica Carr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Erica Carr