

Bill: HB 1388

SUPPORT (FAV)

Julia L Miller, VMD, cVMA
56 Fahnestock Road
Malvern, PA 19355

Statement:

Non-competes in the veterinary industry set aside ethical ability to treat patients and allow profits over veterinary care. Non-competes also incentivize toxic work-place conditions and “trap” associates, who are typically early in their career and debt-ridden, into positions that cause long-term mental health damage. I personally experienced this situation in Maryland as an equine veterinarian. I had an extensive 2-year non-compete clause at my first job out of my internship. The job that I anticipated to be a professional career motivating position, turned into a job that was toxic along with being asked to perform unethical/illegal procedures. I felt extremely stuck, since if I didn’t conform, I would be out of a job and would have to up-root my whole life out of the area to find a new job. In the end, I couldn’t continue at this particular practice and did end up taking a new job in PA, out of the non-compete. There are no “trade secrets” in medicine – the practitioners, their skill set and their personalities are what attract clients/patients. Non-competes for this type of work are unethical to both the associates and the animals who end up not receiving care especially during the current times of severe veterinary shortages.

Please consider the negative aspects of non-competes, including forcing veterinarians out of an industry that is facing shortages, causing determinantal sequelae to patient care, forcing associates to go against our ethical code of conduct and AVMA standards, and contributing to the veterinary mental health crisis.

Sincerely,

Julia L. Miller, VMD, cVMA