



Maryland Veterinary Medical Association (MDVMA)

Established in 1886, MDVMA is a volunteer, non-profit organization comprised primarily of licensed Maryland Veterinarians.

HB1354 - State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners - Veterinarians, Veterinary Technicians, and Veterinary Assistants

Committee: Environment and Transportation

March 4, 2026

MDVMA Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

On behalf of the Maryland Veterinary Medical Association and its approximately 500 member veterinarians and licensed veterinary technician members we are writing to support, with amendments HB1354.

We believe most of the bill as written is appropriate to reinforce and enhance the veterinary medical community and services to our patients. Our concerns with the bill as written are specific to lines 28-31 on Page 2.

Veterinary technicians should be respected for their critical role serving this profession; they are indispensable. Their skillset is unique and while technicians and veterinarians work alongside the patient and with clients to provide care there is not substantial overlap in their training and development. Veterinary technicians do not view their position as a stepping-stone toward more in our profession. They are where they wish to be. This association certainly recognizes their considerable contributions.

It is difficult to comprehend a process that could be implemented to meaningfully expedite the credentialing process for a veterinary practitioner. Veterinary technicians are highly trained professionals taught a valuable technical skillset that is briefly, if at all addressed in the formal education of a veterinary practitioner. Veterinary practitioners are taught the physiology and pharmacology and anatomy of disease; these critical components of medicine are not taught to technicians. While serving in the profession, there is little opportunity for veterinary practitioners to convey this knowledge base to the technicians they are working with. Veterinarians are highly skilled practitioners with a minimum of four years medical training in addition to their predoctoral studies and many veterinary practitioners have additional educational components beyond the typical eight years of training. It is critical to the public that veterinarians are well trained diagnosticians and surgeons. Apprenticeship models are impractical for a medical professional program that requires a fundamental and progressive knowledge basis that must largely be procured through a traditional educational process.

If the purpose is to help ameliorate a veterinary shortage, particularly for food animal practice, we recommend an amendment to strike lines 28-31 on page 2 and replace with a more broadly applicable statement such as the following: "The Board shall establish a policy to attract and retain rural veterinarians in the State".

MARYLAND VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

In closing, we wish for this testimony to serve as a direct statement from licensed technicians in our state that they are also concerned about the language on lines 28–31 page 2. Veterinary Technicians rely on veterinarians for advice and guidance. As licensed individuals themselves they want to be assured that veterinarians they are working with are appropriately trained and they also recognize there is a general lack of overlap to allow for the implementation of any accelerated process to advance a technician to a veterinary practitioner safely or responsibly.

Sincerely,

Matthew Weeman DVM MS, Legislative Committee Chair, Board Member and Food Animal Representative to the MDVMA

Autumn Reed, Md-LVT

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