

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1331

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Agriculture & Rural Economic Development, March 23, 2007

Title: An act relating to veterinary technicians.

Brief Description: Changing veterinary technician credentialing to licensure.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Kretz, Wallace, Walsh, Cody, Strow, Hinkle, Pettigrew, Priest and Dunn.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/06/07, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 3/22/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Hatfield, Vice Chair; Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member; Morton and Shin.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: Veterinary technicians are registered under the state veterinary medicine statutes. Veterinary technicians are to work under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian who retains professional and personal responsibility for work performed by a veterinary technician. Veterinary technicians are eligible to receive registration after passing an examination and either having completed a post high school course approved by the Board of Veterinarian Governors (board) or have had five years of practical experience with a licensed veterinarian.

In 2005, legislation was proposed that would have removed the option of obtaining registration as a veterinary technician based on the five years experience criteria. This legislation prompted a review under the Department of Health (DOH) Sunrise Review Process. The DOH issued a report in January 2006 that contains the recommendations from the review of the veterinarian technician laws. The board may adopt a rule to establish a minimum standard for continuing education for veterinary technicians.

Summary of Bill: Persons who pass an examination and have completed an approved course, or have five years of experience with a licensed veterinarian, are to receive a license instead of a registration. The board is to adopt rules to identify the standard tasks and procedures for determining whether the practical experience requirement is met.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

One licensed veterinary technician is added to the current six-member Board of Veterinary Governors. However, the veterinary technician is a nonvoting member with respect to board decisions related to discipline of veterinarians.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED STRIKING AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Agriculture & Rural Economic Development): The veterinary technician to be added to the board must be trained in both large and small animal medicine.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: It would be hard to run a veterinary clinic without veterinary technicians. Granting them licensing status provides greater protection for the technician and the public. Clear criteria is needed to judge whether a person's experience qualifies them to be a licensed veterinary technician.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Haigh, prime sponsor; Greg Hanon, Washington State Veterinary Medical Association; Markiva Contris, Washington State Association of Veterinary Technicians.