

By: Cook of Colorado

H.B. No. 1767

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the regulation of veterinary medicine.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 801.004, Occupations Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 801.004. APPLICATION OF CHAPTER. This chapter does not apply to:

(1) the treatment or care of an animal in any manner by the owner of the animal, an employee of the owner, or a designated caretaker of the animal, unless the ownership, employment, or designation is established with the intent to violate this chapter;

(2) a person who performs an act prescribed by the board as an accepted livestock management practice, including:

(A) castrating a male animal raised for human consumption;

(B) docking or earmarking an animal raised for human consumption;

(C) dehorning cattle;

(D) aiding in the nonsurgical birth process of a large animal, as defined by board rule;

(E) treating an animal for disease prevention with a nonprescription medicine or vaccine;

(F) branding or identifying an animal in any manner;

1 (G) artificially inseminating an animal in a
2 nonsurgical manner, including training, inseminating, and
3 compensating for services related to artificial insemination in a
4 nonsurgical manner; and

5 (H) shoeing a horse;

6 (3) the performance of a cosmetic or production
7 technique to reduce injury in poultry intended for human
8 consumption;

9 (4) the performance of a duty by a veterinarian's
10 employee if:

11 (A) the duty involves food production animals;

12 (B) the duty does not involve diagnosis,
13 prescription, or surgery;

14 (C) the employee is under the direction and
15 general supervision of the veterinarian; and

16 (D) the veterinarian is responsible for the
17 employee's performance;

18 (5) the performance of an act by a person who is a
19 full-time student of an accredited college of veterinary medicine
20 or is a foreign graduate of a board-approved equivalent competency
21 program for foreign veterinary graduates and who is participating
22 in a board-approved extern or preceptor program if the act is
23 performed under the direct supervision of a veterinarian employing
24 the person;

25 (6) an animal shelter employee who performs euthanasia
26 in the course and scope of the person's employment if the person has
27 successfully completed training offered by the [~~Texas~~] Department

1 of State Health Services under Section 823.004, Health and Safety
2 Code;

3 (7) a person who is engaged in a recognized
4 state-federal cooperative disease eradication or control program
5 or an external parasite control program while the person is
6 performing official duties required by the program;

7 (8) a person who, without expectation of compensation,
8 provides emergency care in an emergency or disaster; or

9 (9) a consultation given to a veterinarian in this
10 state by a person who:

11 (A) resides in another state; and

12 (B) is lawfully qualified to practice veterinary
13 medicine under the laws of that state.

14 SECTION 2. Section 801.351, Occupations Code, is amended by
15 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (c) to read as
16 follows:

17 (a) A person may not practice veterinary medicine unless a
18 veterinarian-client-patient relationship exists. A
19 veterinarian-client-patient relationship exists if the
20 veterinarian:

21 (1) assumes responsibility for medical judgments
22 regarding the health of an animal and a client, who is the owner or
23 other caretaker of the animal, agrees to follow the veterinarian's
24 instructions;

25 (2) possesses sufficient knowledge of the animal to
26 initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the
27 animal's medical condition; and

1 (3) is readily available to provide, or has provided,
2 follow-up medical care in the event of an adverse reaction to, or a
3 failure of, the regimen of therapy provided by the veterinarian.

4 (c) A veterinarian-client-patient relationship may not be
5 established solely by telephone or electronic means.

6 SECTION 3. Section 801.353, Occupations Code, is amended by
7 adding Subsection (f) to read as follows:

8 (f) A veterinarian does not violate this section by
9 providing the name or address of a client to a health authority,
10 veterinarian, or physician who requests the identity of the client
11 to obtain information for:

12 (1) the verification of a rabies vaccination; or

13 (2) other treatment involving a life-threatening
14 situation.

15 SECTION 4. Sections 801.357(a) and (d), Occupations Code,
16 are amended to read as follows:

17 (a) A veterinarian may dispose of an animal that is
18 abandoned in the veterinarian's care if the veterinarian:

19 (1) gives the client, by certified mail to the client's
20 last known address, notice of the veterinarian's intention to
21 dispose of the animal; and

22 (2) allows the client to retrieve the animal during
23 the 10 [~~12~~] days after the date the veterinarian mails the notice.

24 (d) An animal is considered abandoned on the 11th [~~13th~~] day
25 after the date the veterinarian mails the notice under Subsection
26 (a) unless an agreement is made to extend the care for the animal.

27 SECTION 5. Subchapter H, Chapter 801, Occupations Code, is

1 amended by adding Section 801.3585 to read as follows:

2 Sec. 801.3585. LIABILITY FOR REPORTING ANIMAL CRUELTY;
3 IMMUNITY. A veterinarian who in good faith and in the normal course
4 of business reports to the appropriate governmental entity a
5 suspected incident of animal cruelty under Section 42.09, Penal
6 Code, is immune from liability in a civil or criminal action brought
7 against the veterinarian for reporting the incident.

8 SECTION 6. Subchapter H, Chapter 801, Occupations Code, is
9 amended by adding Section 801.362 to read as follows:

10 Sec. 801.362. AUTHORITY TO DISPENSE DRUGS PRESCRIBED BY
11 ANOTHER VETERINARIAN IN EMERGENCY. (a) A veterinarian may
12 dispense a drug, other than a controlled substance, prescribed by
13 another veterinarian if:

14 (1) failure to dispense the drug could interrupt a
15 therapeutic regimen or cause a patient to suffer;

16 (2) the prescribing veterinarian informs the
17 dispensing veterinarian that the drug is appropriate and necessary
18 for the animal;

19 (3) the quantity of the dispensed drug does not exceed
20 a five-day supply for each animal annually;

21 (4) the annual total of dosage units of drugs
22 dispensed under this subsection is not more than five percent of the
23 total dosage units of drugs the veterinarian dispenses in a year;
24 and

25 (5) the veterinarian maintains records of dispensing
26 activities under this section consistent with board rules.

27 (b) A veterinarian does not violate Section 801.402 by

1 ordering a prescription drug in compliance with this section for
2 the treatment of an animal without first establishing a
3 veterinarian-client-patient relationship.

4 (c) The board may adopt rules to implement this section.

5 SECTION 7. Section 801.504, Occupations Code, is amended by
6 adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

7 (c) Venue for the prosecution of an offense under this
8 section that consists of the violation of Section 801.251 is in a
9 district court in Travis County.

10 SECTION 8. A veterinarian is not required to maintain the
11 records required by Section 801.362(a), Occupations Code, as added
12 by this Act, until September 1, 2006.

13 SECTION 9. (a) Section 801.504(c), Occupations Code, as
14 added by this Act, applies only to an offense committed on or after
15 the effective date of this Act.

16 (b) An offense committed before the effective date of this
17 Act is covered by the law in effect when the offense was committed,
18 and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

19 (c) For purposes of this section, an offense is committed
20 before the effective date of this Act if any element of the offense
21 occurs before that date.

22 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.