

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1502 (Berman)

As Amended September 3, 2025

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Extends the sunset date for the California Veterinary Medical Board (CVMB) until January 1, 2030, increases fee authority for the CVMB, recasts and revises requirements related to continuing education, and makes various other technical changes, statutory improvements, and policy reforms in response to issues raised during the CVMB's sunset review oversight process.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Remove the specific mandate that the CVMB inspect at least 20% of licensed premises annually, and instead requires that the CVMB "make every reasonable effort to ensure timely inspection" of licensed premises.
- 2) Clarifies that an employee of an animal control shelter or humane society may only administer sodium pentobarbital for euthanasia when doing so in the capacity of their employment.
- 3) Makes conforming statutory changes related to the revised continuing education requirements.
- 4) Makes other minor and technical changes pursuant to the CVMB's joint sunset review.

COMMENTS

Sunset review. In order to ensure that California's myriad professional boards and bureaus are meeting the state's public protection priorities, authorizing statutes for these regulatory bodies are subject to statutory dates of repeal, at which point the entity "sunsets" unless the date is extended by the Legislature. The sunset process provides a regular forum for discussion around the successes and challenges of various programs and the consideration of proposed changes to laws governing the regulation of professionals. Currently, the sunset review process applies to approximately three dozen different boards and bureaus under the Department of Consumer Affairs, as well as the Department of Real Estate and three nongovernmental nonprofit councils.

On a schedule averaging every four years, each entity is required to present a report to the Legislature's policy committees, which in return prepare a comprehensive background paper on the efficacy and efficiency of their licensing and enforcement programs. Both the Administration and regulated professional stakeholders actively engage in this process. Legislation is then subsequently introduced extending the repeal date for the entity along with any reforms identified during the sunset review process.

Issues Raised during Sunset Review. The background paper for the CVMB sunset review oversight hearing contained a total of 23 issues and recommendations, each of which is eligible to result in statutory changes enacted through the CVMB's sunset bill. Beyond extending the Board's sunset date to January 1, 2030, the following issues are currently addressed in AB 1502:

- 1) *Issue No.1 - Unlicensed Practice Penalties:* This bill grants the Executive Officer (EO) of the CVMB the authority to issue a citation, with an administrative fine no less than \$2,000 and no more than \$10,000, to a person or entity for each violation of practicing or offering to practice veterinary medicine without a license, registration, or permit.

In addition, the bill clarifies that the Board shall prioritize resources to ensure any individuals representing the greatest threat of harm are identified and disciplined expeditiously, rather than the current standard that they only prioritize such individuals if they are veterinarians or RVTs.

- 2) *Issue No.5 – Board Composition.* In order to reflect the diverse array of professionals, patient types, and practice settings common across the field of veterinary medicine, this bill adds an additional RVT member to the Board, bringing the total members of the Board to nine. Further, the bill specifies that one of the four veterinary members shall specialize in equine practice, large animals, or both.
- 3) *Issue No.6 – Fees.* This bill grants the CVMB the authority to raise its various licensing, registration, and permitting fees, subject to specified caps. Additionally, the bill establishes separate fee categories for "small veterinary premises", which constitutes three or fewer full-time equivalent veterinarians, "medium veterinary premises", which constitutes four-to-eight full-time equivalent veterinarians, and "large veterinary premises", which constitutes greater than nine full-time equivalent veterinarians. Finally, the bill removes the requirement that the CVMB maintain a fund condition of no more than 10 months in reserves, thus reverting their fund condition to the 24-month reserve maximum that is standard for other entities under the DCA.
- 4) *Issue No.7 – Drug Compounding for Veterinary Assistant Controlled Substance Permit (VACSP) Holders.* Like many other healing arts professionals, veterinary professionals utilize many types of drugs—including certain controlled substances—for pain relief, disease prevention, anesthesia, and more, across the varied animal patients they service. In 2003, the Board and the wider veterinary community represented by CVMA supported legislation (SB 175, (Kuehl), Chapter 250, Statutes of 2003, that brought the regulation of veterinary drugs under the oversight of the Board of Pharmacy (BOP), with provisions to ensure collaboration with the VMB as necessary to regulate storage, diversion, reporting and monitoring. Since then, Board staff has worked with BOP to implement regulations related to controlled substances, drug compounding, and many other issues in a largely collaborative manner, including the implementation of a Veterinary Assistant Controlled Substances Permit (VACSP) in 2016.

Current law limits drug compounding—which is the process of combining, mixing or altering ingredients of a drug to tailor it for the needs of a specific patient—to be performed by a licensed veterinarian, or an RVT under the supervision of a veterinarian. During an April 2022 MDC meeting, stakeholders raised concerns that only allowing veterinarians and RVTs to compound drugs severely limits access to care. For example, an RVT in an emergency veterinary hospital opined that the COVID-19 pandemic further limited veterinary care and severely exacerbated wait times in emergency settings; according to this RVT, prohibiting VACSP holders from compounding—which can include tasks as mundane as adding medications to an IV fluid –added further burden to already understaffed veterinary establishments. The Board agrees with this assessment, and in its 2025 Sunset Review Report has requested amendments to BPC Section 4826.5 that will authorize VACSP holders to drug

compound under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. As such, this bill authorizes VACSP holders to compound drugs for animal use, pursuant to all federal and state regulations.

- 5) *Issue No. 9 – RVT School Approvals.* This bill repeals BPC Section 4843, removing redundant requirements that the CVMB approve all schools offering RVT curricula.
- 6) *Issue No.11 – Animal Patient Records.* The bill requires a veterinarian to provide a copy of written records to a client or the client's authorized agents within five days of receiving a written or verbal request, subject to specified conditions, including if the animal is in critical condition. Furthermore, the bill adds a requirement that within 30 days of receiving written or verbal request from a client, the licensee manager of a veterinary premises shall provide a record of the client payments made, and requires that client payment records be maintained for at least three years from the client's last visit.
- 7) *Issue No.12 – Continuing Education.* This bill recasts, revises, and expands the existing CE statute and regulations into a unified "Article 3.1" under the Practice Act. Additionally, to streamline administrative bloat, the bill removes the requirement that the CVMB proactively approve additional CE course providers, and instead authorizes them to adopt an order specifying that a CE course provider is no longer valid. Finally, the bill adds additional requirements on CE course providers regarding certificates of completion and record retention for purposes of CE audits.
- 8) *Issue No.12 – Fingerprints for License Reinstatement.* The bill clarifies that, when submitting a petition for reinstatement, a petitioner must include a full set of fingerprints for purposes of conducting a criminal history check.
- 9) *Issue No.15 – Administrative Streamlining.* Among other technical changes related to permit issuance and disciplinary authority, the bill expands the requirements of RVT registration to include the submission of a full set of fingerprints for the purpose of conducting a criminal history record check and a state and federal criminal offender record information search, as specified. Further, the bill expedites disciplinary proceedings by allowing stipulated settlements without requiring formal administrative proceedings, reducing delays and costs for both the Board and licensees.

According to the Author

This bill is the sunset review vehicle for the California Veterinary Medical Board, authored by the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. The bill extends the sunset date for the Board and enacts technical changes, statutory improvements, and policy reforms in response to issues raised during the Board's sunset review oversight process.

Arguments in Support

This bill is supported by the *California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)*, who writes: "the CVMA supports the continued existence of the Veterinary Medical Board under the Department of Consumer Affairs, to regulate the practice of veterinary medicine in California. The CVMA believes that an independent board is essential to ensure the competency of licensees who perform complex medical procedures and provide critical care to animals. The Board's Executive Officer, Legal Counsel, and Board representatives are to be commended for their efforts to elevate consumer protection and oversee the veterinary medical profession."

Arguments in Opposition

This bill is opposed, unless amended, by the *Animal Physical Therapy Coalition (APTC)*, who writes: "AB 1502, as written, represents a significant fiscal and legal risk to the state while failing to address longstanding issues of accountability and transparency within the VMB. A two-year extension with targeted reforms and fair, capped enforcement authority would better serve Californians, protect taxpayer funds, and align the VMB with its true mission: protecting the public and ensuring access to safe, effective animal healthcare."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) The 2025-26 Budget Act provides approximately \$9.244 million (VMB Contingent Fund) and 38.3 positions to support the continued operation of the VMB. The VMB notes the other following impacts resulting from the provisions of this bill:
 - a) Increased fee revenue of up to \$5.8 million annually from the revision of the VMB's current fee structure from a fixed amount to specify statutory fee limits. The VMB notes it would be required to promulgate regulations to increase fees within the statutory limit.
 - b) Minor travel costs, totaling to an annual cost of approximately \$4,000, to add an additional registered veterinary technician (RVT) board member.
- 2) The Office of Information Services within the Department of Consumer Affairs reports costs of approximately \$11,000 to update applications, add fee codes, and make other IT changes. Costs are anticipated to be absorbable through the redirection of existing maintenance resources.

VOTES:

ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 17-0-1

YES: Berman, Flora, Ahrens, Alanis, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Caloza, Chen, Elhawary, Wilson, Irwin, Jackson, Krell, Lowenthal, Macedo, Nguyen, Pellerin

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hadwick

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-0-2

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez, Ta

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0-3

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Sanchez, Schiavo, Ta

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