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CONSENT

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Bill No: AB 1733  
Author: Lee (D)  
Introduced: 2/5/26  
Vote: 21

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SENATE BUS., PROF. & ECON. DEV. COMMITTEE: 6-0, 6/1/26  
AYES: Wahab, Choi, Archuleta, Arreguín, Niello, Umberg  
NO VOTE RECORDED: Caballero, Grayson, Menjivar, Smallwood-Cuevas,  
Strickland

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-0, 5/7/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

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**SUBJECT:** License and registration renewal: continuing education

**SOURCE:** California Animal Welfare Association

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**DIGEST:** This bill allows veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) to include the hours of self-study, and up to a specified number of hours of pro bono spay or neuter services to be credited toward the required hours of continuing education (CE).

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) under the jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer Affairs to license and regulate veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians (RVTs), veterinary assistant-controlled substance permit holders, and registered veterinary premises. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) § 4800 *et. seq*)
- 2) Requires all veterinarians and RVTs, except for the first renewal period, to obtain CE relevant to developments in the practice of veterinary medicine.

(BPC § 4858(a))

- 3) Authorizes six of the required 36 hours of CE may be earned by doing either, or a combination of, the following:
  - a) Up to six hours taking self-study courses, which may include, but are not limited to, reading journals, viewing video recordings, or listening to audio recordings; or
  - b) Up to four hours providing pro bono spaying or neutering services for a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group, as specified. (BPC § 4858.1)
  
- 4) Allows up to four hours of the required 20 hours for RVTs to be earned by doing either of the following, or a combination thereof:
  - a) Up to four hours may be earned by taking self-study courses, which may include, but are not limited to, reading journals, viewing video recordings, or listening to audio recordings;
  - b) Up to two hours may be earned by performing pro bono animal health care tasks related to spaying and neutering services, as specified. (BPC § 4858.2(b)(2)(A)(B))

This bill:

- 1) Revises the CE requirements for a licensed veterinarian and an RVT as follows:
  - a) Allow a total of six hours of the required 36 hours of CE for a licensed veterinarian to be earned by taking self-study courses.
  - b) Allow up to a total of four hours of the required 36 hours of CE for a licensed veterinarian to be earned by providing spay or neuter services at no cost.
  - c) Allow a total of up to four hours of the required 20 hours of CE for an RVT to be earned by taking self-study courses.
  - d) Allow a total of up to two hours of the required 20 hours of CE for a RVT to be earned providing animal health care tasks related to spay or neuter services at no cost.
  
- 2) Makes the following findings and declarations:
  - a) Doctors of veterinary medicine continue to innovate to address the pet overpopulation crisis.
  - b) Animal shelters in California support funding to advance education in high-quality, high-volume spay and neuter services to address the pet

overpopulation crisis. Animal shelters further support veterinarians who receive continuing education credit for their time spent volunteering to provide spay and neuter services in California's animal shelters.

3) Makes other technical changes.

## **Background**

*Veterinarians, Registered Veterinary Technicians, and the Veterinary Medical Board.* The VMB is responsible for the licensure and regulation of veterinarians and RVTs in California. To obtain a license to practice veterinary medicine an individual must meet specified educational requirements and pass a national examination. An RVT must be registered with the VMB to provide the designated animal health care tasks. There are multiple pathways to become an RVT in California. All applicants must take and pass the National Veterinary Technician National Exam offered by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards and graduate from a VMB-approved program or obtain education equivalency certified by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalency for veterinary technicians.

To renew a veterinarian license or an RVT certification, current law requires a licensed veterinarian to complete 36 hours of CE every two years and a RVT to complete 20 hours of CE every two years.

To reach the required CE hours, veterinarians and RVTs are permitted to accumulate the hours through a variety of pathways. For example, veterinarians may attend approved courses relevant to veterinary medicine including courses by American Veterinary Medical Association accredited colleges and associations, government agencies, certain nonprofit conferences, and more. RVTs can attend courses sponsored or co-sponsored by the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America recognized veterinary technician specialty organizations, or state veterinary technician associations recognized by the secretary of state in that state.

Additionally, veterinarians may earn up to four hours of the required 36 hours of CE by providing no cost spaying and neutering services "under the supervision of a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group.", and can earn six hours by completing self-study courses including "reading journals, viewing video recordings, or listening to audio recordings." (BPC § 4858.1). RVTs can earn up to

four hours of the required CE by taking self-study courses and earn up to two hours of the required CE by performing animal healthcare tasks related to spaying and neutering services at no cost to a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group (BPC § 4858.2).

However, current law limits veterinarians and RVTs to only credit a limited number of CE hours toward either self-study or the no cost spay and neuter services, or a combination of the two. In other words, if a veterinarian completed 4 hours of no cost spay and neuter services, they can only credit two hours of self-study toward their CE. Or if a veterinarian already completed six hours of self-study, they are unable to earn CE hours performing no cost spay and neuter services. The author and sponsors argue that the current structure disincentivizes veterinarians and RVTs from providing no cost spay and neuter services to obtain CE. The goal of this bill is to allow the full accumulation of self-study hours to be counted towards CE, while allowing veterinarians and RVTs to accumulate the additional four and two hours respectively of CE for performing services related to spay and neuter for no costs to a public animal control agency or shelter, society for the prevention of cruelty to animals shelter, humane society shelter, or rescue group.

*Pet Overpopulation.* AB 2300 (Maienschein, Chapter 236, Statutes of 2018), authorized veterinarians and RVTs to accumulate hours for CE credit to support no cost spay and neuter services. The impetus of that bill was to encourage veterinarians to provide free spay and neuter services to help address the pet overpopulation and assist shelters and other non-profit rescue groups to provide these services at low or no cost helping to support communities who may not have access or resources to traditional spay and neuter services and help with the demand at shelters and other rescues as dogs and cats must be spayed or neutered prior to adoption.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 6/15/26)

California Animal Welfare Association (source)  
California Veterinary Medical Association  
Veterinary Medical Board

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 6/15/26)

None received

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:** Supporters note generally that this bill will help to incentive licensed veterinarians and RVTs to provide spay and neuter services at shelters to help address the pet overpopulation.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 66-0, 5/7/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Bonta, Chen, Flora, Gallagher, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Papan, Petrie-Norris, Celeste Rodriguez, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks

Prepared by: Elissa Silva / B., P. & E.D. / 916-651-4104  
6/16/26 16:43:01

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