

The Fairness to Pet Owners Act is not necessary and in fact will place many pets' lives in harm's way. Veterinarians are educated and licensed to be providers and stewards of animal medical, surgical, dental, ophthalmological, and pharmacological needs. No other professionals, such as physicians, dentists, or pharmacists, receive training in the area of animal medicine or pharmacology.

Veterinarians are already required to provide a written prescription to owners, as requested.

NCVMB: "If a veterinarian, based upon his/her medical opinion, is willing to dispense medication, then the veterinarian must also provide a prescription in place of said medication should the owner request a prescription."

Pet owners already frequently exercise this right, and many veterinarians openly discuss cost effective options that are also safe and have equal efficacy with their patients' owners. The explosive growth over the last several years of animal prescriptions filled online, speaks to the awareness and ease with which pet owners can presently obtain portable prescriptions from their veterinarian. Not only is this law unnecessary, but it will result in many pet owners receiving inadequate or erroneous information regarding drug side effects and efficacy of generic substitutes from well-intentioned pharmacists, who receive no training in the area veterinary pharmacology.

Veterinarians all receive extensive training in pharmacology and provide invaluable information to pet owners that cannot be provided by human pharmacists. This law will diminish the opportunity for veterinarians to properly educate pet owners about drug risks, side effects and possible interactions with other drugs and medications the individual pet may be using. This is especially true when owners are presented with multiple available generics and substitutes, which may not be appropriate or safe substitutes for various species (cats versus dogs). Store staff members and human pharmacologists have no training in these medications in dogs or cats and would be a dangerous replacement for the veterinarian.

The further veterinarians are removed from the multiple aspects of the pet healthcare, the more negative and possibly life-threatening problems we will see among our companion animals. This is well documented in the OTC market for parasiticides, especially in cats. This law will hurt both pet owners and their pets in regards to their health and safety, as well as their wallets. Veterinarians are already obligated to provide written prescriptions to their clients and this law is redundant in that aspect and additionally provides circumstance for harm to come to companion animals.

The inability of animals to verbalize when they are having a reaction or when drugs are non-efficacious makes this situation unique and unlike the contact lens industry. Additionally, if improper contact lenses are selected by untrained patients, only their wallets are injured. However, if incorrect systemic drugs (for any use) are ordered or distributed, then not only are wallets injured but also health and well-being.