

August 21, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you to express my concern about H.B. 1406, otherwise known as the Fairness to Pet Owners Act.

If passed into law, veterinarians like myself would be required to write prescriptions for medications we prescribe, regardless of whether or not the medication is sold in our hospital. In a recent study published in a veterinary journal, it was estimated that over 20% of written prescriptions for humans never get filled by the consumer.

Because pharmacists are not trained in veterinary pharmacology, they are prone to making mistakes.

I myself had an experience whereby a prescription for .2mg of thyroid medication was incorrectly filled by an outside pharmacy for 2.0mg. Thankfully the owner noticed the error, and called the veterinary hospital for instructions. Had she given the pills as directed, the dog would have experienced seizures, cardiac arrest, and death. (Veterinarians, if you are using this letter as a template, insert your own horror story here!).

Every veterinarian I know has had similar issues with outside pharmacies. We all understand that in these difficult economic times, clients want to shop around for the lowest possible prices. This is why we are already required by law to write prescriptions for clients that ask us to do so. An additional federal law requiring us to do something we already do is redundant, unnecessary, and will likely lead to workplace inefficiency, as we will undoubtedly feel the need to check the work of unqualified pharmacists.

Making matters worse is the the proposed bill's mandate to forbid veterinarians from protecting themselves from pharmacy errors by taking away our right to require clients to sign a waiver of liability with all written prescriptions. It is as if Wal-Mart, the main lobbyist for this bill, does not trust its own pharmacists to correctly follow our instructions.

Veterinary professionals not be forced to worry about frivolous lawsuits and challenges to our licenses that occur as a result of an untrained pharmacist's error.

In short, this is burdensome, intrusive, and unnecessary legislation that I respectfully urge you not to support.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Ian Bruce Kupkee DVM
FL Veterinarian
Sabal Chase Animal Clinic

