

To whom it may concern: "Pet Medications Workshop, Project No. P12-12-1".

Re: **H. R. 1406**

1. Section 2,1,A. Most, if not all states require that veterinary prescriptions be made available to the public/consumer. The *public is in fact well informed* of these provisions. 1-800 PET MEDS has been advertising on television with thousands of ads for the last 10 years touting the availability of prescription drugs outside usual veterinary channels. Target, Walgreen's and numerous other entities are now advertising the availability of veterinary drugs through their pharmacies. Providing written prescriptions when not requested is a waste of business resources and time. Providing a disclosure as to where the pet owner may or may not have their pet's prescription filled is childish at best and again a waste of time and resources. A written disclosure? Seriously, is Walmart required to provide me with a written disclosure that I have the option to shop elsewhere? The public is informed. They are not children.
2. My four-doctor practice in particular provides one hundred plus prescriptions a day to clients. Many pets receive multiple dispensed prescription medications during an office visit. The burden of providing each and every client a proposed written prescription, which in many cases will go unused, and disclosures, is wasteful and burdensome. If each dispensed written prescription takes 2-3 minutes to process that would equal 4 hours per day, at an average daily cost of \$80.00/day, over *twenty five thousand dollars per year*. That is money that will come directly from the employee wages, employee health care, investment in facilities and equipment, as these monies will have been spent needlessly. Many prescriptions are used within the veterinary facility setting for seriously ill patients being hospitalized. Requiring me to provide a written prescription to a pet owner under those circumstances is ridiculous. Would I be required to have the pet owner come down each and every time during the day that a prescribed medication is changed/alterd/added to receive their written prescription? Many hospitalized pets receive numerous injectable prescribed medications while in the hospital. Again, should they be required to come down to the hospital receive their written prescription prior to me administering necessary and potentially life saving medications, as the majority of injectable medications are available outside usual veterinary channels? How would that work? Would the medication be handled safely? Chemotherapy drugs? Would I feel safe administering a medication that the client brought in from another source? Liability and safety/quality/handling issues abound! During an average office call numerous prescribed single dose medications are administered orally or topically. Should a copy be required for these? The client will be continually confused. Was the medication to be repeated? "Why did I get a copy when it will not be used again" will be the client's retort.

3. Equating this bill to the contact lens industry is disingenuous. The contact lens providers fought tooth and nail not to provide written prescriptions. We as veterinarians do not have an issue at all with providing written prescriptions upon request. The AVMA has a written statement supporting this position. Forcing redundancy and unnecessary disclosure is a waste of veterinarian time and effort.. A DECADE ago when the contact lens providers, optometrists, were dealing with this same issue, countrywide state practice acts did not require them to provide written prescriptions on request. The overwhelming number of practice acts at the state level requiring veterinarians to provide written prescriptions has all but alleviated that concern on our industry. In addition, optometrists only deal with ONE item, contact lenses! Contact lenses are **not** an urgent need item. We are a multifaceted health care provider. Outpatient office call administered oral, transdermal and injectable medications as well as hospitalized pets requiring the same. When I prescribe and administer a vaccine will I be required to provide a prescription, as vaccines are available through other channels? Enacting this legislation/law will certainly provide an example of the “Law of unintended consequences”. Everything we prescribe and use will require a written prescription & disclosure. We deal with thousands of medications, some available through large pharmaceuticals and some through small compounding pharmacies. Again the public *IS* informed.
4. With respect to pharmacy choice in general, federal law allows private health insurance companies to **DICTATE** which pharmacy one can use for prescription medications. I.E. Medco and Express Scripts to name a few.
5. Section 2 1B. This can and should be addressed at the state level professional licensing boards.
6. Section 2,2,a,i. Again, this can and should be addressed at the state level
7. Section 2,2,a,ii. Naive and unenforceable. Unfortunately veterinary practices will be forced to raise the exam/office call fees, laboratory fees, anesthesia and surgery fees across the board to recoup the expenses of implementing this proposed regulation. No one would be naive enough to line item a charge, or require overt payment for a prescription. In any event, since when does government decide which efforts and services provided can or cannot be charged for? UNAMERICAN! If a client is not happy with being charged for a written prescription they have the right to do business elsewhere. Free market will favor the practices that do not charge a fee. In addition veterinary practices ARE presently entitled to charge for patient’s records to be reproduced/sent/e-mailed to the extent of costs incurred. Although few in fact do.
8. Section 2,2,a,iii. Again, this can and should be addressed at the state level
9. Section 2,2,B. This is ludicrous! What right does the federal government have to dictate to me whether or not I require immediate payment? Many people in the economically distressed times are unable to afford immediate payment. The public, denying us payment for services yet demanding their written prescription, will hold veterinary practices captive. Fortunately we are one of the last areas of the health care industry to offer payment plans, delayed payments etc. Yes we are for the most part old school in that we value our clients and patients.

I am shocked and dismayed to see such a bill proposed at the federal level. The bill is unworkable, unfair and burdensome to any size veterinary business, unenforceable and out right un-American. It is blatant example of big business pushing their self-serving agenda upon small businesses using legislative minions to do their bidding. This is not about saving the consumer money or providing choice, this as it is about big corporations vying for market share at the expense of small business. Veterinarians do not wish to be forced to supplement their advertising budgets with our efforts.