



Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association

September 13, 2012

Federal Trade Commission
Office of the Secretary
600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Room H-113 (Annex X)
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA) does not see the need for the proposed legislation H.R. 1406, Fairness to Pet Owners Act of 2011. Nebraska, as well as, other states already have effective regulations, laws, and/or practice guidelines pertaining to veterinary prescription writing.

It is our belief and ethic that when veterinarians are asked for a written prescription that one is provided to the client. Consequently, making written prescriptions mandatory for veterinarians appears to be unnecessary and burdensome. It does not make sense to require a written notification to the client that the prescription may be filled elsewhere, regardless of whether or not the client is having the prescription filled by the practice.

The provision requiring verification of prescriptions, regardless of whether the pharmacy is accredited or licensed, places the veterinarian in both a legal and ethical dilemma. At the same time it puts the consumer at risk. While we recognize that retail pharmacies are filling prescriptions issued by veterinarians upon the request of their clients, we expect this to be conducted in accordance with state laws and administrative rules of boards of pharmacies. Regrettably, this has not always happened in Nebraska – and it has caused serious concerns among our member veterinarians.

Example: A veterinarian was treating a dog for urinary incontinence. The client was given a prescription for the estrogen hormone, “diethylstilbestrol”, for treatment. The client took the prescription to a local discount pharmacy where it was recommended by the pharmacist to substitute “megesterol”, which is another estrogen hormone. The client informed the veterinarian of the substitution, in which, the veterinarian immediately recommended that the client discontinue using “megesterol” because in dogs this medication can cause significant disease of the bone marrow. The veterinarian proceeded to call the pharmacist and alert them of the serious risk to the pet because of their lack of knowledge regarding the effects of drugs in humans vs. animals.

This proposed bill, with its condemning language and confusing requirements, would cast an unwarranted doubt on the integrity of a profession traditionally regarded as one of the most respected and trustworthy in Nebraska and the United States.

Thank you for your time and consideration. The NVMA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this topic.

Respectfully,

Melissa Lemons, DVM
President
Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association