



March 17, 2016

Representative Beth McCann, Chair
Health, Insurance & Environment Committee
Colorado House of Representatives
200 East Colfax, State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Colorado HB 16-1324

Dear Madam Chairwoman and members of the Committee:

On behalf of its more than 88,000 members, the American Veterinary Medical Association respectfully submits this letter in support of legislative efforts to ensure access to lifesaving medications for veterinary patients.

Each day, our members treat animals that vary widely with respect to species, size and anatomy – from cherished family pets to large animals in stables and zoos. There are relatively few FDA-approved medications available to treat animals, and many are in dosages or forms that are not appropriate for all of our veterinary needs. Common examples of compounding for veterinary use include preparing an oral paste or suspension from crushed tablets, or adding flavoring to a drug.

Under current Colorado law, these medications must be obtained through a patient-specific prescription. Time is required for the medication to be formulated and delivered to the provider or owner; this results in a delay – often several days – before it can be administered to the animal.

The AVMA believes veterinarians should be able to legally maintain sufficient quantities of compounded preparations in their offices for urgent administration needs or emergency situations. For example, one of the most reliable methods of treating a dog that has accidentally eaten something poisonous is administering injectable apomorphine – a safe method of inducing vomiting by use of a drug that is only available in compounded form.

Therefore, the AVMA is supportive of legislation, such as HB 16-1324, that would allow veterinarians to stock limited quantities of these medications, provided by licensed compounding pharmacies, to treat the urgent needs of their patients and prevent complications, suffering and death. We also support providing veterinarians with the flexibility to dispense reasonable amounts of these medications to clients if they can't immediately access a compounding pharmacy. We appreciate this opportunity to provide our perspective. If you have questions regarding the AVMA's comments, please contact Ms. Kate Tormey at (847) 285-6779 or ktormey@avma.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

W. Ron DeHaven, DVM, MBA
Executive Vice President and CEO