

HB 501 – Proponent Testimony

March 13, 2018

Chairman Hill, Vice-Chairman Koehler, Ranking Member Patterson and members of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee:

My name is Kingsly Berlin and I am from Rittman, Ohio. I am here to testify in support HB 501, which changes the title of "registered veterinary technician" to "registered veterinary nurse" in the Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes.

I started my animal career at The Ohio State University in 2002. I have a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a major in Animal Sciences. Then I went back to school and graduated with an Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology from Kent State University at Tuscarawas. I took the national exam and passed and have been a registered technician since 2009 (9 years). I worked in two small animal clinics while in tech school for three years. I then spent 5 years at The Ohio State University campus in Wooster at the Ohio Agriculture Research Development Center in the Food Animal Health Program as a lab animal technologist. I was also the only registered veterinarian technician working with the only attending veterinarian on campus. One issue with being a technician is always explaining to the public and sometimes coworkers we are not veterinarians and we have duties like a human nurse but just for animals. I am always questioned on my education and do have to explain that I went to college and received a degree and then take boards to become registered. I once was asked if I would leave my job in animal care to get a better one since I had a degree. This question made it sound like the work I was doing was beneath me. This person had no clue what I did.

The last 5 years I have been an instructor at Kent State University at Tuscarawas for the veterinary technology program. Explaining to the public and students what we do (for recruitment and advertising) is one of the hurdles that we deal with. I hear from the public constantly that they didn't know we had to go to school to be registered or that we were just helpers and didn't know what all we could do.

What do we do? We provide nursing care (physicals, applying bandages, giving injections). We restrain animals for procedures. We draw blood and run the laboratory tests. We collect fecals and urine and run those laboratory tests. We provide grooming (brushing, combing, trimming). We place IV catheters, calculate fluids and administer those fluids and medications. We induce for surgery, monitor anesthesia, and recover the patient. We calculate and take diagnostic radiographs. We do full dental exams and cleanings including radiographs. We cuddle the patients when they are scared. We feed them when they can't eat on their own. We clean their cages when they become soiled and we can do so much more. When you use the word technician I think of someone who works on machines or in a lab. When you use the word nurse I think of someone that does everything listed above.

I am in support of HB 501 because the title change will more accurately reflect what we do. It allows the public to better understand our role, training, and scope of abilities. This will also allow us to attract more students to our program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 501. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.