

February 26, 2018

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Senator Bob Hackett
Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee
Ohio Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Support for SB 232/HB 433, Continuing Education Credits for Veterinarians Related to Free Spay/Neuter Services

Dear Senator Hackett,

The Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA), a national veterinary professional organization with a focus on animal welfare, strongly supports SB 232/HB 433, which would allow veterinarians to receive up to two hours of continuing education credit biennially for providing free spay/neuter services in conjunction with animal shelters or animal rescue groups.

Veterinarians can gain substantial knowledge through their involvement in pro bono spay/neuter work, including learning new peri-operative procedures, other effective anesthesia protocols and more efficient surgical techniques. For example, pediatric or early-age sterilization techniques are not universally taught in veterinary schools, however they are routinely performed at spay/neuter clinics.

Additionally, there are a wide range of educational resources that veterinarians are exposed to via their participation in these clinics as well as through providing free spay/neuter services in their own practices in partnership with shelters and rescue groups. For example, in 2016, the Association of Shelter Veterinarians published newly updated veterinary medical care guidelines for spay/neuter programs, including those performing high-quality high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) and these guidelines are now commonly referenced at spay/neuter programs nationwide.¹

Finally, new scientific perspectives on sterilization are still emerging and that information is typically shared among veterinary professionals participating in spay/neuter programs. For example, the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* published a piece addressing the issue of fetal suffering during the sterilization of pregnant animals, and this article continues to generate discussion in the veterinary community on this important topic.²

In addition to the educational opportunities noted above, veterinary participation in pro bono spay/neuter clinics is an obvious benefit for animals and the entire community. In these tough economic times, providing the opportunity for veterinarians to earn continuing education credit while simultaneously helping alleviate pet overpopulation and reduce the number of

unwanted companion animals euthanized at Ohio shelters, is a win-win arrangement. We believe SB 232/HB 433 will help improve the health and well-being of dogs and cats in Ohio.

The HSVMA respectfully urges your support of this important animal welfare measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Hodges, DVM, MBA
HSVMA Veterinary Advisor

¹ avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.249.2.165

² White, Sara C., DVM. Prevention of fetal suffering during ovariohysterectomy of pregnant animals. JAVMA, Vol 240, No 10, May 15, 2012, pp 1160-1163