

STATE BILL UPDATES

AB 2056, a proposal to make California the first state to regulate the mostly unregulated pet health insurance industry. This measure, which requires insurance carriers to clearly inform consumers of what specific conditions pet policies cover and which are exempted, faced no opposition. It passed unanimously in both chambers and was sent to Gov. Brown on Aug. 27. It is still unknown if Gov. Brown will sign it.

AB 272: Changes the minimum date for vaccinating dogs against rabies from 4 months to 3 months. This bill is intended to bring California into compliance with the rules in other states and with manufacturers' recommendations. Under current law, dogs that are imported from other states often have to be revaccinated against rabies. The law is expected to pass. **UPDATE**: *AB 272 was signed into law and was effective as of January 1, 2014.*

AB 343 ("Ag Gag" bill): Withdrawn from consideration. This bill would have required anyone who witnessed animal cruelty to report it to the proper authorities within 120 hours or face penalties. The real purpose of the bill was to prevent whistle blowers from recording or reporting cruelty to animals involved in food production by creating impossible criteria for them to follow. California is just one of the states where this type of legislation is being promoted.

SB 809: Adds fees to licensees who prescribe controlled drugs in order to fund the CURES program, which is currently underfunded. The VMB is trying to exempt veterinarians from the requirement to participate in CURES, which does not really apply to veterinary practice. The Board members voted to monitor the bill while attempting to be exempted out of the bill's requirements.

AB 1839: Effective on January 1, 2013. This law changed the title of *unregistered assistant to veterinary assistant*. The law also continues to allow veterinary assistants and RVTs to administer controlled substances under the direct or indirect supervision of a veterinarian. Veterinary assistants who have access to controlled substances are now required to undergo a background check to ascertain that they have had no convictions for drug or alcohol abuse. RVTs do not have to be background checked since they were fingerprinted prior to the issuance of their licenses.

SB 1162: Effective Jan. 1, 2013. Allows certain Animal Control Officers to use tranquilizers per SB 1162.

AB 1904 requires licensing boards to prioritize applications from military spouses. After hearing an explanation from a representative of the Department of Consumer Affairs, the VMB voted to add a check box to DVM and RVT applications asking if the applicant is a military spouse. If the applicant checks the box, their application would be expedited. The VMB will put an announcement in their newsletter regarding the new process.