

SS SB 115 -- VETERINARY MEDICINE

SPONSOR: Brown

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Government Efficiency and Downsizing by a vote of 8 to 4. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 4 to 2.

This bill preempts the entire field of legislation concerning the practice of veterinary medicine. Political subdivisions shall be preempted from enacting, maintaining, or enforcing any order, ordinance, rule, regulation, policy, or similar measure that prohibits, restricts, limits, regulates, controls, directs, or interferes with the practice of veterinary medicine.

This bill is similar to HB 801 (2023), and SB 1058 (2022).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say municipal governments have no place intruding in the practice of veterinary medicine. Decisions about animal health ought to be left to animal owners and their veterinarians. A patchwork of differing local regulations relating to the practice of veterinary medicine doesn't serve the profession and isn't conducive to positive health outcomes for animals.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Brown; Missouri Animal Husbandry Association; Mo Farm Bureau; Chuck Berry, DVM; Matt Silvius DMV; and David Wilson, DVM, Missouri Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA); Missouri Federation of Animal Owners; Mo Cattlemen's Association ; and the Mo Pet Breeders Association.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say local governments don't pass ordinances related to animal health on a whim. Those governments do so based on input of experts in the field and using a deliberative process that is responsive to the desires of their constituents. Preempting the entire field of veterinary medicine will have vast implications that make unintended consequences inevitable. Local control should be preempted rarely and in very specific circumstances.

Testifying in person against the bill were Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation; Animal Legal Defense Legislative Fund; Humane Society of the United States; and Sean Kieran Brennan.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under "House Testimony on Senate Bills" on the House website.