

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE AMENDMENT

Bill No. HB 805 (2026)

Amendment No.

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| ADOPTED | <u> </u> (Y/N) |
| ADOPTED AS AMENDED | <u> </u> (Y/N) |
| ADOPTED W/O OBJECTION | <u> </u> (Y/N) |
| FAILED TO ADOPT | <u> </u> (Y/N) |
| WITHDRAWN | <u> </u> (Y/N) |
| OTHER | <u> </u> |

1 Committee/Subcommittee hearing bill: Industries & Professional
2 Activities Subcommittee

3 Representative Melo offered the following:

5 **Amendment (with title amendment)**

6 Remove everything after the enacting clause and insert:

7 **Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Veterinary**
8 **Workforce Innovation Act."**

9 **Section 2. Section 474.201, Florida Statutes, is amended**

10 **to read:**

11 474.201 Legislative findings, intent, and purpose.—

12 (1) The Legislature finds that the practice of veterinary
13 medicine is potentially dangerous to the public health and
14 safety if conducted by incompetent and unlicensed practitioners.
15 The legislative purpose in enacting this chapter is to ensure
16 that every veterinarian practicing in this state meet minimum

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17 requirements for safe practice. It is the legislative intent
18 that veterinarians who are not normally competent or who
19 otherwise present a danger to the public ~~shall~~ be disciplined or
20 prohibited from practicing in this state.

21 (2) The Legislature finds that the practice of educated,
22 trained, and experienced veterinary professional associates will
23 increase consumer access to high-quality veterinary medical
24 services at a reasonable cost to consumers, while also
25 increasing the efficiency of the practice of veterinary medicine
26 in this state.

27 **Section 3. Present subsection (14) of section 474.202, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (15), and a new subsection (14) is added to that section, to read:**

30 474.202 Definitions.—As used in this chapter:

31 (14) "Veterinary professional associate" means an
32 individual who has graduated with a master's degree or the
33 equivalent in veterinary clinical care from an accredited
34 institution and who meets the requirements to be registered by
35 the department.

36 **Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 474.2021, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

38 474.2021 Veterinary telehealth.—

39 (4) A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth:

40 (a) May not engage in the practice of veterinary
41 telehealth unless it is within the context of a

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42 veterinarian/client/patient relationship;

43 (b) Shall practice in a manner consistent with his or her
44 scope of practice and the prevailing professional standard of
45 practice for a veterinarian who provides in-person veterinary
46 services to patients in this state and shall employ sound,
47 professional judgment to determine whether using veterinary
48 telehealth is an appropriate method for delivering medical
49 advice or treatment to the patient;

50 (c) May use veterinary telehealth to perform an initial
51 patient evaluation to establish the veterinarian/client/patient
52 relationship if the evaluation is conducted using synchronous,
53 audiovisual communication. The evaluation may not be performed
54 using audio-only communications, text messaging, questionnaires,
55 chatbots, or other similar means. If a veterinarian practicing
56 telehealth conducts a patient evaluation sufficient to diagnose
57 and treat the patient, the veterinarian is not required to
58 research a patient's medical history or conduct a physical
59 examination of the patient before using veterinary telehealth to
60 provide a veterinary health care service to the patient;

61 (d) If the initial patient evaluation is performed using
62 veterinary telehealth, must provide the client with a statement
63 containing the veterinarian's name, license number, and contact
64 information and the contact information for at least one
65 physical veterinary clinic in the vicinity of the patient's
66 location and instructions for how to receive patient follow-up

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care or assistance if the veterinarian and client are unable to communicate because of a technological or equipment failure or if there is an adverse reaction to treatment, and inform the client that, if medication is prescribed, the client may obtain a prescription that may be filled at the pharmacy of his or her choice. The veterinarian shall obtain from the client a signed and dated statement indicating the client has received the required information before practicing veterinary telehealth;

(e) Shall prescribe all drugs and medications in accordance with all federal and state laws and the following requirements:

1. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs specifically approved for use in animals by the United States Food and Drug Administration, the use of which conforms to the approved labeling. Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may be issued for up to 6 months ~~1 month~~ for products labeled solely for flea and tick control and up to 30 ~~14~~ days of treatment for other animal drugs. Prescriptions based solely on a telehealth evaluation may not be renewed without an in-person examination.

2. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not order, prescribe, or make available medicinal drugs or drugs as defined in s. 465.003 approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for human use or compounded antibacterial,

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92 antifungal, antiviral, or antiparasitic medications, unless the
93 veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical examination of
94 the animal or made medically appropriate and timely visits to
95 the premises where the animal is kept.

96 3. A veterinarian may not use veterinary telehealth to
97 prescribe a controlled substance as defined in chapter 893
98 unless the veterinarian has conducted an in-person physical
99 examination of the animal or made medically appropriate and
100 timely visits within the past year to the premises where the
101 animal is kept.

102 4. A veterinarian practicing veterinary telehealth may not
103 prescribe a drug or other medication for use on a horse engaged
104 in racing or training at a facility under the jurisdiction of
105 the Florida Gaming Control Commission or on a horse that is a
106 covered horse as defined in the federal Horseracing Integrity
107 and Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. ss. 3051 et seq.;

108 (f) Shall be familiar with available veterinary resources,
109 including emergency resources, near the patient's location and
110 be able to provide the client with a list of nearby
111 veterinarians who may be able to see the patient in person upon
112 the request of the client;

113 (g) Shall keep, maintain, and make available a summary of
114 the patient record as provided in s. 474.2165; and

115 (h) May not use veterinary telehealth to issue an
116 international or interstate travel certificate or a certificate

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117 of veterinary inspection.

118 **Section 5. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) and subsection**

119 **(7) of section 474.203, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

120 474.203 Exemptions.—This chapter does not apply to:

121 (5) (a) Any person, or the person's regular employee,
122 administering to the ills or injuries of her or his own animals,
123 including, but not limited to, castration, spaying, and
124 dehorning of herd animals, unless title is transferred or
125 employment provided for the purpose of circumventing this law.
126 This exemption does not apply to any person licensed as a
127 veterinarian in another state or foreign jurisdiction and
128 practicing temporarily in this state. However, except as
129 provided in s. 474.2126 or s. 828.30, only a veterinarian may
130 immunize or treat an animal for diseases that are communicable
131 to humans and that are of public health significance.

132 (7) Any veterinary aide, nurse, laboratory technician,
133 preceptor, person registered pursuant to s. 474.2126, or other
134 employee of a licensed veterinarian who administers medication
135 or who renders auxiliary or supporting assistance under the
136 responsible supervision of a licensed veterinarian, including
137 those tasks identified by rule of the board requiring immediate
138 supervision, provided that a registered veterinary professional
139 associate is subject to s. 474.2126. However, the licensed
140 veterinarian is responsible for all such acts performed under
141 this subsection by persons under her or his supervision.

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143 For the purposes of chapters 465 and 893, persons exempt
144 pursuant to subsection (1), subsection (2), or subsection (4)
145 are deemed to be duly licensed practitioners authorized by the
146 laws of this state to prescribe drugs or medicinal supplies.

147 **Section 6. Section 474.2126, Florida Statutes, is created
148 to read:**

149 474.2126 Veterinary professional associates;
150 registration.—

151 (1) REGISTRATION.—

152 (a) A veterinary professional associate may apply to the
153 department for registration by submitting a form prescribed by
154 the board. The department shall consider for registration each
155 qualified veterinary professional associate whom the department
156 verifies has submitted a completed application and meets the
157 applicable requirements of this subsection.

158 (b) The department shall issue a certificate of
159 registration to each veterinary professional associate applicant
160 whom the department verifies has graduated from the relevant
161 accredited program and received a passing score on the relevant
162 professional national competency examination approved by the
163 board.

164 (c) The department shall make a list of registrants
165 available to the public on the department's website.

166 (d) The department may suspend the registration of any

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167 veterinary professional associate whom the board determines has
168 caused serious harm to an animal due to negligence,
169 incompetence, or misconduct related to duties performed under
170 this section and in a manner inconsistent with the supervising
171 veterinarian's specific direction, until such time as the
172 registrant has completed remedial training or education directed
173 by the board.

174 (e) The department may rescind the registration of any
175 veterinary professional associate who is convicted of animal
176 cruelty under s. 828.12 or animal fighting under s. 828.122.

177 (2) PROHIBITION.—An individual may not hold himself or
178 herself out as a registered veterinary professional associate or
179 in any other way represent himself or herself as a veterinary
180 professional associate unless he or she has a valid certificate
181 of registration from the department.

182 (3) DUTIES AND ACTIONS OF A REGISTERED VETERINARY
183 PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE.—

184 (a) Unless otherwise prohibited by federal law, a
185 registered veterinary professional associate may engage in the
186 practice of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202 or
187 veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202, to the extent that
188 he or she is competent and has the necessary training, current
189 knowledge, and experience to provide such care, as delegated
190 under the responsible supervision, as defined in s. 474.202, of
191 a licensed veterinarian.

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192 (b) A registered veterinary professional associate may not
193 do any of the following:

194 1. Prescribe a controlled substance listed in s. 893.03,
195 except that a registered veterinary professional associate may
196 perform humane euthanasia and prepare, log, and administer
197 controlled substances for the purpose of analgesia, anesthesia,
198 or humane euthanasia, as delegated by a licensed veterinarian
199 and performed under responsible supervision.

200 2. Perform a surgical procedure, except that a veterinary
201 professional associate may perform the following surgical
202 procedures:

203 a. Orchiectomy;
204 b. Veterinary dental surgery; or
205 c. Veterinary suturing or stapling of skin lacerations,
206 gingival incisions, or existing surgical incisions.

207 **Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsection**
208 **(3) of section 828.30, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

209 828.30 Rabies vaccination of dogs, cats, and ferrets.—

210 (1) (a) All dogs, cats, and ferrets 4 months of age or
211 older must be vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian or a person
212 authorized under paragraph (b) or s. 474.2126 against rabies
213 with a vaccine that is licensed by the United States Department
214 of Agriculture for use in those species.

215 (3) Upon vaccination against rabies, the licensed
216 veterinarian shall provide the animal's owner and the animal

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217 control authority with a rabies vaccination certificate. Each
218 animal control authority and veterinarian shall use the "Rabies
219 Vaccination Certificate" of the National Association of State
220 Public Health Veterinarians (NASPHV) or an equivalent form
221 approved by the local government that contains all the
222 information required by the NASPHV Rabies Vaccination
223 Certificate. The veterinarian who administers the rabies
224 vaccination or who supervises the administration of the rabies
225 vaccination as provided in paragraph (1) (b) or s. 474.2126 to an
226 animal as authorized under this section may affix his or her
227 signature stamp in lieu of an actual signature.

228 **Section 8.** This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

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231 **T I T L E A M E N D M E N T**

232 Remove everything before the enacting clause and insert:

233 A bill to be entitled

234 An act relating to veterinary medicine; providing a
235 short title; amending s. 474.201, F.S.; revising
236 legislative findings, intent, and purpose; amending s.
237 474.202, F.S.; defining the term "veterinary
238 professional associate"; amending s. 474.2021, F.S.;
239 increasing the amount of time for which prescriptions
240 based solely on a veterinary telehealth evaluation may
241 be issued for certain drugs; amending s. 474.203,

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242 F.S.; revising the applicability of certain
243 exemptions; creating s. 474.2126, F.S.; providing
244 requirements for veterinary professional associates to
245 receive certificates of registration from the
246 Department of Business and Professional Regulation;
247 requiring the department to make a list of veterinary
248 professional associate registrants publicly available
249 on its website; authorizing the department to suspend
250 the registration of a veterinary professional
251 associate upon a certain determination by the Board of
252 Veterinary Medicine; authorizing the department to
253 rescind the registration of a veterinary professional
254 associate under certain circumstances; prohibiting a
255 person from holding himself or herself out as a
256 veterinary professional associate under certain
257 circumstances; authorizing a registered veterinary
258 professional associate to engage in the practice of
259 veterinary medicine under certain circumstances;
260 prohibiting a registered veterinary professional
261 associate from taking certain actions; providing
262 exceptions; amending s. 828.30, F.S.; conforming
263 provisions to changes made by the act; providing an
264 effective date.
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