

Written testimony by and in support of bill HB 1388/ SB 1182

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Dear Honorable Senators of the State of Maryland. I submit this written testimony in favor of HB 1388/SB 1182 to prohibit non-compete agreements in health care and veterinary professions. I support this bill from a position of a family member of two dedicated, highly skilled, professional, and hard working veterinarians. My son specializes in the critical care of horses. He is a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. My daughter-in-law specializes in equine lameness and sports medicine. They are currently not able to practice veterinary medicine in a large portion of the state of Maryland due to non-compete clauses in their contracts from their previous employer. After almost six years of working at a local veterinary practice, and they were the longest working associate vets in the history of that practice, they tenured their resignations. The owner did not fulfill several clauses within their contracts; including a clause that they would be offered a buy-in agreement after three years of employment. They attempted on multiple occasions to discuss the issues with the employer to no avail. They continued to work for the clinic for the next three years for the benefit of other employees who depended upon them, and to serve their clients and their horses. The work environment became toxic and deteriorated on a daily basis. They submitted their resignations last November. The non-compete clause in their contracts forces them to move out of area or drive significant miles every day outside of the non-compete radius to practice their profession. They also have the option to leave the profession that they have trained for so long to practice. There is already an extreme shortage of large animal veterinarians across the country. My son spent twelve years in school, internship, and residency to train for his profession as a surgeon. The non-compete clause impacts not only my son and daughter-in-law, but their two small children, their family members (including myself), as well as countless clients and horses who will suffer without their care. Ten support staff members, who very much depend on every paycheck, were also forced to find new and (in some cases) lower paying jobs, as a result of the situation.

I am a recently retired educator and administrator with 44 years of experience. I can tell you that when you lose an excellent teacher from your local area, it is extremely difficult to replace them because of fewer teachers going into the profession-similar to fewer veterinarians going into the profession. Support of HB 1388 would help to keep excellent medical professionals and veterinarians within the state of Maryland.

One month after I retired, I dehydrated myself working in my yard that sent me into a medical emergency. I spent several days in the hospital on IV infusions. I share this personal experience for two reasons. First- it was my son who took me to the hospital. His medical knowledge helped me to recognize the seriousness of the situation and his ability to take me in person helped me to

overcome my fear of doctors and hospitals. Secondly- I have a fear of doctors but because of my medical emergency, I have finally found a doctor who I am comfortable with and whom I trust. I would not want to have to change my doctor because of a non-compete clause in his contract. I am sure that horse owners feel the same about trusting and finding a skilled veterinarian to treat or operate on their horses.

I also moved from my home of 40 years to be closer to my son, daughter-in-law and their two children. It would be an extreme hardship for all of us if they had to move because of a non-compete clause that violates the public interest in so many ways.

Non-compete clauses are anti-business, anti-freedom and contrary to the American way. Consumers, clients, customers, and especially patients should be able to choose their own doctors, nurses, medical personnel and veterinarians who best meet their needs. Please support the passage of HB 1388/SB1182. It is important for the community, the medical profession and the veterinary community in Maryland.

Thank you for your public service to your committee and the state of Maryland. Thank you for your support of HB 1388/SB 1182. Sincerely,

Sharon Caniglia

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