

Maree Harrison-Brown

Bill: HB 1388

Position: In Favor

I am a Maryland resident and the owner of an aging equine. Wolf Creek Equine has been my trusted veterinary practice servicing my horses needs from routine vaccines, Coggins and more recently lameness exams and treatment. My horse was initially under the care of Dr. Hartson, then when she departed the practice in September 2023 we moved under the care of Dr. Williamson who knowledgeable and caringly treated my horse during a lameness episode from September – November 2023.

With the departure of Dr. Williamson and Dr. Caniglia in late 2023, Wolf Creek Equine was left severely understaffed, having 3 excellent Veterinarians leave the practice in just a few short months.

When my horse presented with similar lameness symptoms in early January 2024 I was faced with a few options:

1. Seek an appointment with Wolf Creek, which given their staffing situation and the non-urgent nature of my case, would likely have seen my horse experience discomfort for a pro-longed period of time.
2. Find an alternative provider and establish a new care relationship.

It was while pursuing this second option that I discovered that Dr. Williamson had established her own practice, Chesapeake Equine Performance. Hoping to preserve continuity of care, I contacted Dr. Williamson who was willing to see my horse her being subject a Non-compete Clause with Wolf Creek Equine meant that I would need to trailer my lame horse 60+ miles round trip, for evaluation and treatment.

I chose to trailer my horse from Davidsonville across the Bay Bridge to a location outside of the Non-compete to secure timely medical treatment on January 26th.

The following day, on January 27th, there was a horrific multi-vehicle accident that occurred on the Bay Bridge, closing the bridge for many hours. Upon hearing this news, I felt very fortunate to have crossed safely with my horse the previous day. I feel a lot of empathy for people who were injured or impacted by the multiple hour delay; to have been stuck on that bridge with a lame horse in a trailer for multiple hours is a prospect I hadn't considered and something that will weigh heavily on my mind when faced with a similar decision.

The State of Maryland has a long and revered relationship with the Horse industry. In honor of this longstanding relationship, I feel we owe it to Maryland horse owners to make Veterinary services readily accessible. We can do this is through the voiding of prohibitive Non-compete and Conflict of Interest clauses in Employment Contracts for Veterinary Professionals. I therefore fully support the passing of HB1388.