

HB 1388 AN ACT CONCERNING LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT – NONCOMPETE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST CLAUSES – VETERINARY AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

March 5, 2024

In Support (FAV)

Chair Delegate Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Delegate Bonnie Cullison and Members of the Health and Operations Committee; Chair Delegate Marc Korman, Vice Chair Delegate Regina T. Boyce and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Corri Goldman and I am a Maryland resident and long-time horse owner. I am strongly urging you to support *HB 1388, An Act Concerning Labor and Employment - Noncompete and Conflict of Interest Causes - Veterinary and Health Care Professionals*.

With more than 100,000 horses in Maryland - and an annual economic impact of nearly \$3 billion - horses and horse sport are vital to the State's economy, culture and image. Availability of care is critical for an equine or other large animal in acute distress. Any delay can and often does result in serious harm or death to the animal. And if mobile veterinary care is unavailable, transporting an equine or other large animal to a clinic can be a costly, complicated and time intensive effort.

Maryland, like all other States, is facing an alarming shortage of equine veterinarians. The primary factors contribute to this concerning trend are:

- An overall decrease in the number of veterinarians who are electing to practice in the large animal (versus small animal) field; and
- The proliferation of non-compete restrictions as conditions of employment. In our region, we have witnessed a progressive loss of large animal veterinarians over the past several years while gaining virtually no new practitioners. The prevalence of non-compete restrictions unquestionably has exacerbated this situation. Meanwhile, the use of non-compete restrictions does not appear to be serving any public policy purpose or resolving any existing problem. Existing veterinary practitioners are oversubscribed and, if my experience is any indication, the rate of veterinary emergencies is far outpacing the number of veterinarians available at any given time.

HB 1388 addresses this situation in not only the veterinary medical field, but the human health care field as well. I urge you to support of HB 1388.

Sincerely,



Corri Goldman

