



## SOUTHEAST ALASKA ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER

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March 5, 2021

The Honorable Senator Jesse Kiehl  
State Capitol Room 419  
Juneau AK, 99801-1185

**RE: Exemption for veterinarians from Alaska's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.**

Dear Senator Kiehl:

We are the owners and associate veterinarians of Southeast Alaska Animal Medical Center in Juneau. We are Alaskan small business owners and veterinarians, and are all members of the Alaska Veterinary Medical Association, including Dr. Ward as the association's President-Elect.

We support the exemption for veterinarians from Alaska's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) for many reasons, including:

- Animals are lacking a permanent identifier: There are no permanent identifiers for animals. In fact, animals can have different names and owners throughout their lifetime. As well, at any given time, an animal can also have multiple owner names from within the same household, making knowing which person to search in the PDMP database impossible.
- Potential privacy violations: Searching the PDMP database by the owner could provide medical information the owner is uncomfortable with their veterinarian knowing. Secondly, veterinarians are not trained in human medication doses, just as physicians are not trained in the dose ranges for dogs, cats, birds, horses, etc.
- Veterinarians already adhere to controlled substance regulations: Veterinarians who prescribe or dispense controlled substances are licensed through Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). There is already a significant level of accountability, record keeping, and medication storage requirements that these veterinarians adhere to.
- Cost: PDMP review and reporting constitutes a disproportionate impact on veterinarians as small business owners. Veterinary clinics lack the standardized software used in human health care facilities, so reporting is significantly more labor-intensive and costly. Additionally, the cost to investigate veterinarians who fail to use the database correctly is a waste of very limited resources.

As medical providers it is important to us that the PDMP is used correctly to track trends of human opioid shopping. Thirty-three states currently exempt veterinarians from participating in the PDMP,

because they recognize that the system was not set up for, nor is conducive to, veterinary use. Exemption of veterinarians from the Alaska PDMP will improve the efficacy of the system's intended purpose, by allowing for accurate interpretation of data and trends in human medicine. In addition, veterinarian exemption will allow us to continue to provide appropriate care and medical management of our patients.

Sincerely,



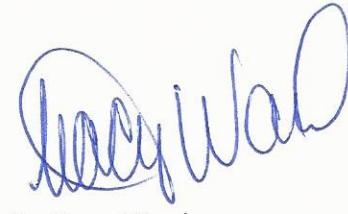
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