

## **Crossing the Finish line in 2024**

Dr. Al Balay, Chair, MVMA Veterinary Technician Committee

In this article, #21 in the series, we share an update of how we are preparing for the 2024 legislative session and a report from the new AVMA Committee on Advancing Veterinary Technicians and Technologists.

At the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MVMA's Government Affairs Committee, Representative John Huot was the legislative speaker. Representative Huot is the author of the Veterinary Technician Licensure Initiative in the Minnesota House (House File 1228). He was quite confident that the bill would get a hearing during the 2024 legislative session and said that he would do all that he could to help the bill move forward. We are hopeful that in 2024 we'll get a hearing in the House Health Finance and Policy Committee that is chaired by Representative Tina Liebling (District 24B – Rochester Area). Representative Liebling's committee is key to crossing the finish line during this upcoming session. The Senate Bill (Senate File 1522) is authored by Senator Robert Kopec and the Senate continues to be supportive of the bill particularly considering the shortage of rural veterinarians. We are encouraging technicians and veterinarians to attend the Veterinary Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet with legislators and express support for the licensure initiative.

If you have any questions or concerns about the initiative to license veterinary technicians, please plan to attend the MVMA and MAVT convention where Kim Horne and Al Balay will present an update each day (Thursday MVMA Practice Plus session and on both Friday and Saturday during the MAVT sessions). We will also be available during the entire convention for meeting with anyone to address any questions. On Thursday afternoon during the Practice Plus session, Sam Geiling CVT. will speak about "Maximizing Veterinary Technicians Through Proper Utilization". Underutilization has been an ongoing concern and there have been several articles and resources recently published to address this issue.

Al Balay was nominated by the MVMA and was accepted as a member of the new AVMA's Committee on Advancing Veterinary Technicians and Technologists (CAVTT). The committee held its first meeting October 23-24, 2023. This is a 13-member committee with four veterinarians and the balance of veterinary technicians. Members represent a diverse background from veterinary general practice, technician education, technician associations, hospital managers, technician specialists, and the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB). The top three agenda priorities identified and discussed were: Title Protection for Veterinary Technicians, Utilization of Veterinary Technicians and Technologists, and Scope of Practice/Levels of Supervision. To facilitate progress on these topics, a subcommittee was established for each priority. Al Balay was appointed to the Scope of Practice/Levels of Supervision subcommittee. The CAVTT members were in support of the AVMA position of not supporting the mid-level practitioner currently. It is anticipated that the CAVTT will submit recommendations to the AVMA Board of Directors for action at the 2024 AVMA Convention.

If you have questions or concerns about licensure of veterinary technicians, or if anyone has examples of how this licensure initiative could positively impact their business, we would love to hear their examples to share with legislators when we meet with them. Dr. Al Balay and Kim Horne's contact info is found on the [MVMA veterinary technician licensure webpage](#).