



MN Horse Council
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Re: HF 208; SF 73: Minnesota Companion Animal Board Bill

To whom it may concern;

The Minnesota Horse Council emphatically opposes this bill for several reasons; first and foremost, this bill creates redundant government. There already is a Board of Animal Health whose purpose is to oversee the health and welfare of the animals of Minnesota. This bill makes poor use of the state revenues by performing the tasks of an already existing board. Second, the definition of "Companion animal" is too broad by statute "companion animal includes any animal owned, possessed, cared for, or controlled by a person for the present or future enjoyment of that person...." Every farmer, rancher and horseman we have known derives enjoyment from the animals they care for. This creates a legal and unnecessary conflict because these are also livestock.

This bill requires a board twice as large as the present Board of Animal Health, which makes decision making more difficult. The make-up of the board is complicated, and the majority of the board are not necessarily individuals of health science.

The most egregious part of this bill is the section that allows the board to "accept gifts, grants, or contributions from any source to support the purposes of the board. The board may apply for and accept grants of money from the Federal government, state, subdivision of the state, any foundation, or any person for any of the board's purposes." This entire section in our opinion invites graft and corruption.

This bill does not uphold the traditions of Minnesota governance and does not fulfil any of the needs of the animal owning or animal loving public. It is with this in mind that the Minnesota Horse Council opposes HF 208, SF 73, the Companion Animal Board Bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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President, Minnesota Horse Council