

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1144

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development, March 28, 1995

**Title:** An act relating to veterinary practice.

**Brief Description:** Amending the veterinary practice act to include implanting of electronic identification devices.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Health Care (originally sponsored by Representatives Dyer, Backlund, Morris, Johnson, Campbell, Cooke, Skinner, Chandler, Casada, Schoesler, Boldt, Mulliken, Huff, Mitchell, Thompson, Foreman, Robertson, Buck, Clements, Smith, Delvin, Carrell, Mielke and Sheahan).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture & Agricultural Trade & Development: 3/16/95, 3/28/95 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & AGRICULTURAL TRADE & DEVELOPMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Loveland, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Bauer, Morton, Newhouse and Snyder.

**Staff:** Bob Lee (786-7404)

**Background:** The practice of veterinary medicine is licensed by the Department of Health, and no person may practice veterinary medicine without being licensed as a veterinarian.

The practice of veterinary medicine includes the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and injuries of animals, including the prescription and administration of drugs and the performance of operations. A number of specific procedures, and those conducted by the animal's owner or the owner's employee, are exempt from activities required to be performed by licensed veterinarians.

Implanting electronic devices for the purposes of identification is not regulated nor included within the scope of practice of veterinary medicine.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** The implanting of an electronic device for the purpose of establishing the positive identification of animals is included within the scope of practice of veterinary medicine. Public fish and wildlife agencies may also implant microchips for identification of fish and wildlife. The current exemption that includes allowing microchipping a person's own animals is retained.

Humane Societies and animal control organizations are authorized to implant the devices on their own animals and not in animals owned by others.

**Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:** Public fish and wildlife agencies are added to those who may implant microchips. Humane societies are limited to implanting microchips on their own animals.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Microchips are inserted 1 to 1-1/2 inches into the muscle of the animals with a rather large needle. Complications can arise if the large needle is inserted at the wrong location. There are a number of exemptions in existing law so that, for example, livestock producers can implant microchips into their own animals.

**Testimony Against:** The Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel should have the ability to place microchips in the fish and wildlife that they manage.

**Testified:** Corey Hanon, Dr. Charles Root, WA State Veterinary Medical Association (pro); Ed Manary, Department of Fish and Wildlife (pro); Jeanne Werner, Nancy McKenney, The Federation of Animal Care and Concern Agency (pro).