

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SSB 5576**

**AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 13, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Establishing a license to practice specialized veterinary medicine.

**SPONSORS:** Senate Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senators West and Niemi; by request of Department of Health).

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & WATER RESOURCES**

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5576 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Barr, Chairman; Bailey, Conner, Gaspard, Hansen, and Newhouse.

**Staff:** Steve Nelsen (786-7535)

**Hearing Dates:** February 22, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

As the practice of veterinary medicine has grown, veterinarians have developed specialized areas of practice and some earn national certification in specialty areas. The Department of Health has requested the creation of a license to practice specialized veterinary medicine.

**SUMMARY:**

The Department of Health may issue a license to practice specialized veterinary medicine to a veterinarian who holds a certification from a national specialty board or college and is not subject to any disciplinary action in the U.S. or Canada. Veterinarians may not practice outside of their specialty area unless they meet the requirements for that practice in current law. The Washington State Veterinary Board of Governors is required to develop rules determining the limits of the specialty areas to assist specialized veterinarians in avoiding practice outside their specialties. The Board of Governors may revoke the specialty license if veterinarians lose their national certification.

The Secretary of the Department of Health replaces the Director of the Department of Licensing in determining the fees for the issuance, renewal, or administration of: veterinary licenses, certificates of registration as an animal technician, temporary veterinary permits, and licenses to practice specialized veterinary medicine.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** yes

**Fiscal Note:** available

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

There are only 14 veterinarians currently board certified as specialists which is insufficient to meet the demand for such specialists which has grown as the body of veterinary knowledge has grown. A license to practice specialized veterinary medicine would attract specialists from other states.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** E. Doyle Montgomery, Veterinary Board of Governors (pro); Susan Shirley, Veterinary Board of Governors (pro); Greg Hanon, Washington State Veterinary Medical Assn. (pro)