The New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association (NJVMA) believes advocacy is crucial to maintaining a profession dedicated to preserving the welfare of all animals. Having a voice in legislative affairs is essential to all veterinarians who practice veterinary medicine in New Jersey. NJVMA provides that voice through its legislative committee, led by Legislative Consultant Rick Alampi, Legislative Agent Dale Florio, and NJVMA members Dr. Barry Adler, Dr. Joe Chiosi, Dr. Robert Gordon, Dr. Charlotte Lacroix, Dr. Josh Portner, Patricia Smillie-Savelli, Esq., and Dr. Todd Wolf.

In 2023, the NJVMA Legislative Committee and its consultants monitored 42 bills that could affect the profession. Some of these bills arise from a single negative interaction, and a veterinarian is often not consulted before the bills are presented. Below are highlights of recent bills.

### FEES – S3137
(Requires publication of prices of standard and emergency services provided by veterinarians). The original wording of this bill was for veterinarians to publicly list all of their prices on the most common charges. This has not only legal implications for price fixing but would also make clients believe we are an 'à la carte' service. NJVMA president Dr. Kim, past president Dr. Edelle and legislative consultant Rick Alampi discussed this bill with the sponsor. They agreed to amend the bill to provide written estimates for procedures over $750.

### EUTHANASIA – S3529
(Requires distribution of policy regarding use of sedation by veterinarian prior to euthanization of animal). This bill requires veterinarians to put in writing and give to clients their sedation policy for euthanasia. NJVMA strongly opposed this bill, noting there were different protocols depending on the species, reason for euthanasia, and case-specific protocols.

### LOAN REDEMPTION – A5007
(Establishes veterinary medicine loan redemption program for certain veterinarians who work in underserved areas for five years). NJVMA Past President Dr. Edson and NJVMA member Dr. Perris worked with the bill sponsor to amend the bill to conform with the AVMA’s model language already published on loan redemption.

### PET GROOMING – S182
(Requires licensing of pet groomers and registration of certain other businesses; establishes certain licensing and operating requirements). Currently pet groomers do not require a license. This bill would require licensing of groomers and that includes specific procedures they routinely perform. This bill has the veterinary board adding significantly to their duties. The wording of the bill is ambiguous and could be interpreted that certain procedures can only be performed by licensed groomers. NJVMA is working to exempt veterinary procedures deemed necessary to the animal’s welfare (e.g. pre-surgical shaving, clipping or removing of matted hair, therapeutic/prescription baths, and others). This bill has had strong opposition from other industries within the animal care community.

### SALES TAX – A4706
(Exempts sales of pet food purchased for pets from the sales and use tax). NJVMA supports the legislation but is seeking an expansion to include all domesticated animal species kept as pets and not just cats and dogs.

### DECLAW – S1803
(Prohibit onychectomy or flexor tendonectomy procedures). Most veterinarians oppose declawing cats. However, allowing laws to dictate how we practice medicine can be a slippery slope. The NJVMA, therefore, opposes this bill solely based on legal precedent.

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The NJVMA continues to advocate on behalf of the veterinary profession in NJ by supporting legislation that advances the profession and opposing legislation that would hinder the practice of veterinary medicine.