Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association

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# Assembly Committee Agriculture

## Testimony
## In support of Assembly Bill 234
**May 3, 2007**

Good morning Chairperson Ott and distinguished members of the Assembly Agriculture Committee. My name is Tom Gilligan. I am president of the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association and a companion animal practitioner in Hartland, Wisconsin. It is my privilege to appear before you this morning on behalf of the 90 percent of Wisconsin's licensed veterinarians who belong to the WVMA. We respectfully ask for your support of Assembly Bill 234.

First, allow me to thank those of you who have already signed on as a cosponsor of Assembly Bill 234, as well as thank Representative Jake Hines and Senator Julie Lassa for their leadership in introducing this measure.

If approved, Assembly Bill 234 would repeal the requirement that veterinarians and certified veterinary technicians obtain continuing education in order to use or direct the use of over-the-counter pesticides. It would also rescind the requirement that a veterinary clinic receive a permit through the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection if someone in the clinic uses, directs the use or repackages pesticides.

It's important to note that pesticides are only used for medical purposes, a fact that in and of itself would preclude special regulatory oversight. But it is also important for you to understand that what we are really talking about as it relates to veterinary use of pesticides is flea control in companion animal practices and lice and mange control in food animal practices.

And, since 1987, when these laws were established, pesticide use in the veterinary practice has changed significantly. Today, instead of dipping a dog in a bathtub full of pesticides to manage fleas, a small spot-on of medicated oil is placed on the fur. In food animal practices, the producers almost always apply the pour-on pesticides instead of the veterinarian.

Furthermore, Wisconsin's law pertains to general use pesticides – pesticides that are sold over-the-counter. Anyone of you can purchase and use the very pesticides that veterinarians and certified veterinary technicians in Wisconsin are required to take special tests to use.

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**Federal laws that regulate restricted and general use pesticides already exempt veterinarians** from special training and testing. In commenting on the exemption of veterinarians from federal laws relating to restricted-use pesticides, the Federal Food and Drug Administration commented that **veterinarians have taken enough courses to understand how to read a label and appropriately apply pesticides**.

In addition to the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association, AB 234 is supported by the Wisconsin Veterinary Examining Board. Administrators of the pesticide laws at the Agricultural Resource Management Division at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection have carefully reviewed this bill and do not oppose it.

In closing, let me again thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak in support of Assembly Bill 234. I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.