

AVMA House of Delegate News for AAAP

Report from: Kate Barger Weathers, Delegate AAAP and Michelle Kromm, Alternate Delegate AAAP

The AVMA House of Delegates (HOD) met in January (Chicago) and July (Washington DC) to discuss important matters related to AVMA strategy, AVMA officer elections, and selected topics facing our profession. The HOD is the main legislative body for the review, debate and voting on proposals related to AVMA policies so that clear guidance is provided for veterinarians and the practice of veterinary medicine. Please see the summary below for key takeaways from the 2025 HOD session. If you have any questions or have specific items that you believe should be addressed by AVMA and/or the HOD, reach out to our AAAP HOD representatives – Karen Grogan, Delegate and Michelle Kromm, Alternate Delegate.

AVMA updates:

- **Membership:** membership in AVMA is strong and growing with >108,000 members. *NOTE: Please remember to renew your AVMA membership when you renew your AAAP membership so that AAAP will continue to meet the requirements for being a constituent allied veterinary organization with the rights to vote in the HOD and to have representation on AVMA councils and committees.*
- **Continuing Education:** AVMA provides a wealth of information via their website (podcasts, approved CE training modules, career development courses, certificate programs, etc.) and most is FREE!
- **American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF):** This is the charitable arm of the AVMA and supports (via grants) AVMA members and students, and grants are also available to help veterinarians support disaster relief, research and pet owners. AVMF vet student scholarships are awarded based on academics, leadership and financial need. *AAAP members are encouraged to support the AVMF. Students are encouraged to apply for scholarships and AAAP members working in disaster relief scenarios can also apply for support. Giving can be done online. More info here: <https://www.avmf.org/our-impact/>*
- **Challenges to the profession:** There were many issues in 2024 and 2025 that required significant AVMA advocacy and leadership efforts. These included: proposal for mid-level profession position (Colorado); concerns for federal workforce reduction and less research funding; emerging/re-emerging diseases; antimicrobial stewardship; access to care and access to medicine/vaccines; rural workforce and student loan issues; and legislative/legal proposals impacting veterinarians. *NOTE: If you are an AVMA member, please consider a \$20 contribution to support the AVMA PAC. Giving can be done online and funding allows AVMA to engage with members of Congress (bipartisan) to advocate for positions that support animal health, veterinary support, etc.*
- **New AVMA officers:** AVMA President (2025-2026): Dr. Michael Bailey; AVMA President Elect (2025-2026): Dr. Jennifer Quammen; AVMA VP (2024-2026): Dr. Gary Marshall; Elected AVMA House Advisory Committee (HAC) members: Dr. Stuart Brown (AAEP delegate); Dr. Diana Thome (WA delegate); Dr. Chris Gargamelli (CT delegate)

AVMA HOD Resolutions: During the Winter HOD and Summer HOD sessions, delegates review, discuss and vote on resolutions at each HOD session. Resolutions typically involve an update on AVMA policies and thus originate from an AVMA council/committee before they are reviewed by the AVMA BOD and then sent to the HOD. If you are serving on an AVMA council or entity that develops

a policy that results in a resolution for the HOD, please contact your AAAP HOD reps. It is great to have 'insider perspective' on the proposal and to keep you up-to-date on what is happening during the HOD session.

- For the July 2025 HOD session in DC, a total of 7 resolutions were discussed and voted on at the meeting. All 7 resolutions passed the House with either no changes, minor edits or minor revision after discussion during the session.
- Summary and link to the final resolutions: <https://www.avma.org/news/discussion-precedes-hod-actions-cat-declawing-animal-pain-other-resolutions>
- A revised Model Practice Act was approved by the HOD as well during this session. A link to highlights of the revision, a process that took 3 years and led by the Council on Veterinary Services can be found here: <https://www.avma.org/news/revised-model-veterinary-practice-act-adopted>

Special Legislative Fly-in

July 2025 HOD fly-in and Capitol Hill engagement: this was the largest fly-in in AVMA history and included 364 people (all HOD members and >100 vet students) and 274 meetings in a span of 4 hours. Primary focus of discussion with staff from House/Senate offices included:

- **Rural Veterinary Workforce Act (S. 1163 / HR 2398)**: this bill aims to recruit and support veterinarians in high-need, underserved rural areas who work in roles to support food animal/food safety/agriculture needs. Loans are currently available for vets but are unfortunately taxed at 39%. This bill aims to avoid the taxing of the appropriated dollars for vets (like what is done for rural MDs). (Note: this is the old Veterinary Loan Repayment Act.)
- **Combating Illicit Xylazine Act (S.545 / HR 1266)**: this bill is supported by DEA, FDA and AVMA. It aims to allow vets to continue to use xylazine (primarily as a sedative for large animals) as a Schedule III drug but addresses public health concerns about illicit use of the drug.