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February 25, 2025

The Honorable Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr., Chair
House Committee on Corporations
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

H 5334 – An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Veterinary Practice

Dear Chair Solomon:

Please accept this letter of support, with one small amendment, regarding H 5334, legislation that would require veterinarians to provide consultations to animal owners when a drug is prescribed and dispensed for that animal patient. This act would take effect on January 1, 2026. Pet owner drug education is crucial in veterinary practice. It helps improve pet owner compliance with complex therapeutic regimens, ensures medications are administered and stored correctly, and protects pets and other animals from disease risk.

Pet owners should be given consultation on the medications dispensed from a veterinarian practice in the same manner that Rhode Island's current laws require pharmacists to offer human patients consultation and education on their medication. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) recommends one small amendment. Specifically, RIDOH recommends the removal of (c) on page 1, line 17, which states: *A veterinarian may delegate to a registered veterinary technician or veterinary assistant the task of providing consultation and drug documentation required by this section.* The removal of this wording would ensure that pet owners receive the same standard of care as human patients when drugs are prescribed and dispensed for the owner's pet. RIDOH's proposed amendment is as follows:

~~(c) A veterinarian may delegate to a registered veterinary technician or veterinary assistant the task of providing consultation and drug documentation required by this section.~~ Provision of a medication information sheet can be delegated to the vet tech, who must offer the pet owner the opportunity to speak with the veterinarian if they have any medication questions.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerome M. Larkin" followed by a flourish and the word "for" written below it.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD
Director

CC: The Honorable Cherie L. Cruz
The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy
