

May 20, 2024

The Honorable GT Thompson
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1010 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Scott:

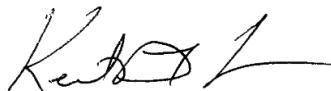
The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is the nation's leading representative of the veterinary profession, speaking for more than 105,000 member veterinarians who care passionately about protecting animal health, animal welfare, and human health. Informed by its members' unique scientific training and knowledge, the AVMA offers strong support for Section 12007 of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024, which protects veterinarians' freedom and flexibility to provide the best care for farm animals.

Proposition 12 (Prop 12) prohibits sales in California of animal products, regardless of whether they are produced in-state or out-of-state, that do not comply with certain livestock housing requirements set by California voters in a 2018 ballot initiative. Because no one husbandry style is appropriate for all circumstances, regulations aimed at improving animal welfare should be based upon scientific evidence and the professional judgement of veterinarians. The arbitrary housing requirements in Prop 12 do not objectively improve animal welfare and may unintentionally cause harm.

In addition, allowing one state to dictate animal raising requirements to other states in order to sell their products in its state not only interferes with interstate commerce, but carves a path for future governance of all states by individual states whose laws they may not agree with. This kind of legislation will create a patchwork of regulations which are often not scientifically based, could impact biosecurity, and would be cost prohibitive and cumbersome for veterinarians and their producer clients to navigate.

The AVMA advocates for policies that advance the practice of veterinary medicine, animal welfare, and animal and public health. Without a solution to Prop 12, veterinarians will be restricted in their options to maximize animal welfare based on a herd's specific needs. Through Section 12007, we urge Congress to address the challenges posed by Prop 12 in the next farm bill reauthorization.

Sincerely,



Kent D. McClure, DVM, JD
Associate Executive Vice President & Chief Advocacy Officer
American Veterinary Medical Association