



April 7, 2021

### **Position Statement Re: 2021 Florida Telemedicine Legislation**

The Florida Legislature is considering two separate pieces of legislation regarding veterinary telemedicine: HB 911 in the House of Representatives, and SB 1370 in the Senate. The two bills originally were the same, but now differ in fundamental respects and have become the topic of much commentary and speculation in social media and traditional media. At this point it is difficult to predict if the Legislature will reach a compromise in the remaining 3 weeks of the session.

Our position supports the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) and the Veterinary Innovation Council (VIC) positions placing the trust and responsibility in the licensed veterinarian to determine if she has ample information to begin working with a pet, particularly those with difficulty accessing veterinary care.

SB1370 was amended in the Senate Agriculture Committee as a result of negotiations between the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA) and the ASPCA. It is a compromise, as happens often in legislative bodies, but does authorize veterinary telemedicine in certain circumstances, including establishment of a telemedicine VCPR, with clear guardrails. We applaud these stakeholders for working out a practical agreement, and VVCA supports this measure, as we have advised Florida's legislative leadership. We are eager to work with any stakeholder to advance the amended Senate legislation or the original House bill. If time runs out in the 2021 short Florida legislative session, then the VVCA pledges to work with stakeholders and the broader community of practitioners and pet owners to create legislation for passage in 2022.

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