

June 20, 2023

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chairwoman
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Chairman
Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member
Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Durbin, McMorris Rodgers, and Jordan and Ranking Members Graham, Pallone, and Nadler:

On behalf of the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) 101,000 veterinarian members, all 50 state and two territory veterinary medical associations, and 11 supporting stakeholder organizations, we urge you to swiftly pass the **Combating Illicit Xylazine Act (H.R. 1839/S. 993)** – a bipartisan bill that would equip the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency with the necessary tools to address the emerging threat of illicit xylazine while preserving veterinary access to this essential animal sedative that is used throughout veterinary medicine.

The veterinary community is not taking the drug epidemic and the role illicit xylazine plays lightly. Illicit xylazine has now been found across the country mixed with fentanyl and other narcotics. This potent drug combination poses grave health and safety risks to human users. In veterinary medicine, xylazine is an important prescription sedative used to facilitate the safe handling and treatment of many species and is particularly important for use in cattle, horses, wildlife, and research species. In cattle, this is an essential drug for safe handling as there is no practical alternative for sedation.

We support this legislation because it strikes the right balance of helping protect our communities from illicit xylazine while maintaining veterinarians' access and ability to legitimately use this critical animal sedative under its current prescription status, regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and state law. It is our understanding that there is not significant

diversion of xylazine from veterinary channels; however, under the proposed legislation, any diversion would be subject to penalties under the federal Controlled Substances Act.

Inaction from Congress on this legislation will disrupt the legitimate veterinary supply chain of legal xylazine, jeopardizing human safety and animal welfare. Our organizations are deeply concerned about the emerging public health threat of illicit xylazine and the negative impact it is having throughout the country. We echo the request from [39 Attorneys General](#) urging congressional leadership to pass the bipartisan, bicameral **Combating Illicit Xylazine Act** without delay.

Please contact Dr. Lindsey Hornickel with the AVMA at lhornickel@avma.org should you have any questions.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Lori Teller DVM, DABVP (canine/feline), CVJ
President, American Veterinary Medical Association

State and Territory Veterinary Medical Associations

Alabama Veterinary Medical Association
Alaska State Veterinary Medical Association
Arizona Veterinary Medical Association
Arkansas Veterinary Medical Association
California Veterinary Medical Association
Colorado Veterinary Medical Association
Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association
Delaware Veterinary Medical Association
District of Columbia Veterinary Medical Association
Florida Veterinary Medical Association
Georgia Veterinary Medical Association
Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association
Idaho Veterinary Medical Association
Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association
Indiana Veterinary Medical Association
Iowa Veterinary Medical Association
Kansas Veterinary Medical Association
Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association
Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association

Maine Veterinary Medical Association
Maryland Veterinary Medical Association
Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association
Michigan Veterinary Medical Association
Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association
Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association
Missouri Veterinary Medical Association
Montana Veterinary Medical Association
Nebraska Veterinary Medical Association
Nevada Veterinary Medical Association
New Hampshire Veterinary Medical Association
New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association
New Mexico Veterinary Medical Association
New York State Veterinary Medical Society
North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association
North Dakota Veterinary Medical Association
Ohio Veterinary Medical Association
Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association
Oregon Veterinary Medical Association
Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association
Puerto Rico Veterinary Medical Association
Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association
South Carolina Association of Veterinarians
South Dakota Veterinary Medical Association
Tennessee Veterinary Medical Association
Texas Veterinary Medical Association
Utah Veterinary Medical Association
Vermont Veterinary Medical Association
Virginia Veterinary Medical Association
Washington State Veterinary Medical Association
West Virginia Veterinary Medical Association
Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association
Wyoming Veterinary Medical Association

Stakeholder Groups

American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Equine Practitioners
American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners
American Academy of Veterinary Pharmacology and Therapeutics
American College of Veterinary Clinical Pharmacology
Animal Health Institute
American Horse Council
National Association for Biomedical Research

National Animal Control and Care Association
National Milk Producers Federation
North American Meat Institute

Cc:

The Honorable Cory Booker
The Honorable Tom Cotton
The Honorable Brett Guthrie
The Honorable Anna Eshoo
The Honorable Andy Biggs
The Honorable Shelia Jackson Lee