

Colette Thompson  
New Sweden  
LD 1220  
March 30, 2025

The Honorable Donna Bailey, Senate Chair  
The Honorable Lori Gramlich, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

To the Chairs and Members on the Joint Committee of Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

I am writing to express my opposition to LD 1220 An Act to Allow Chiropractors to Treat Dogs and Equids. The chiropractic treatment of animals should be reserved for licensed veterinarians who possess the specialized education and training necessary to ensure the health and safety of animals. Here are some things to take into account:

Most veterinarians complete a bachelor's degree majoring in fields like animal science, biology, or chemistry. After earning a bachelor's degree, students must attend an accredited veterinary school, which generally takes an additional 4 years. You are looking at around 8 years of education plus longer when pursuing additional degrees, completing internships or residencies adding another 1 to 4 years of training time depending on the type of specialization, like veterinary chiropractic care.

Chiropractors are trained primarily in human anatomy and physiology, and their education does not encompass the unique anatomical and physiological differences between humans and animals. Dogs and 'equids' have different musculoskeletal systems and require knowledge of veterinary medicine that chiropractors do not possess. While a 210-hour course in animal chiropractic care may incorporate hands-on lab sessions, these take place in a controlled environment rather than real-world settings like barns, stables, pens, or other scenarios outside the typical office visit.

Also, the application of chiropractic adjustments on dogs can pose significant risks, including exacerbating existing injuries, causing fractures, or leading to neurological damage. Without proper veterinary training, chiropractors may not recognize contraindications or potential complications that could arise from their treatments.

Lastly, horses and/or dogs can be unpredictable and difficult to manage. Improper handling during chiropractic adjustments could result in injury to the animal or the chiropractor. For example, a horse might become startled and move suddenly during a treatment, leading to accidents.

To sum up, the primary concern in animal treatment should always be the well-being of the animal. Allowing chiropractors to treat dogs or equids may prioritize alternative treatments over established veterinary practices, potentially compromising the health and safety of animals. The treatment of dogs and equids should remain firmly within the realm of licensed veterinary professionals who are trained to provide safe, effective, and evidence-based care. This approach protects the health of animals and upholds the standards of veterinary medicine. I appreciate your time and consideration of my viewpoint.

Sincerely,

Colette Thompson