

CVMA President

June 15, 2007

Dear Dr. Faoro:

I recently read your letter to the board members regarding the issues surrounding AB1634. It is extremely disappointing that the leadership of this great profession has chosen to align itself with politicians instead of standing up for its members. Undoubtedly you and the rest of the executive board have your reasons. I do believe that you initially did not intend for this to become such a controversy but regrettably you have become so defensive that you will not be gracious and just accept that you made an error in judgment regarding the perspectives of the membership. It is ok to make a mistake; it is not ok to be so arrogant as to think that the voice of the membership does not matter.

I take issue with a few of your statements and would like to point out that although this bill may pass it will not be because the veterinary community stood behind it but because a few thought that politics and future favors were more important than the integrity of the process and honesty to its membership. I attended the meeting in November and voted for a task force to be created to look at language for a spay/neuter bill. There was no urgency at that time and it was specifically brought up that we would have a year + to work on this very important topic. That process was violated.

As a delegate I was blindsided when I learned that the CVMA had agreed to be a sponsor of this bill. I understand that "it was important to be at the table" but I believe that your personal beliefs and aspirations have weighed heavily on the decision making process. It was at that time that I began polling my members and learned that they were almost 95% against this bill. I know that many letters and faxes were sent to the executive office that were apparently not passed down to the BOG, that is very worrisome and I believe that was a strategic mistake because had the STAFF office listened to the opposition we would not be in this situation right now. I believe that it is our job to represent our constituents, not take on a path that we think or ASSUME is right- I believe that is called dictatorship/socialism/communism.

In addition, it was discussed that this bill was targeting a specific group of people- namely the Hispanic/illegal's community in Levine's district where there is a significant problem with pit bulls roaming the streets. Political correctness dictates that you do not write a bill that singles out a specific race. It was also brought up that everyone knew that this law was not enforceable and that it was being pushed as a political maneuver not really a solution. SB 861 was enacted to allow cities to implement breed specific mandatory S/N. San Francisco enacted the spay and neuter of Pit Bulls because that is the problem in their district. Levine supported this bill - why didn't he advise his district to implement it or something similar?

Your inflammatory statements regarding Drs. Hamil, Pasten, and Hjerpe are uncalled for and truly unprofessional. As the leader of the CVMA you should be absolutely ashamed. When people resort to defending themselves by making inflammatory comments it is usually because they know that they are usually wrong and they feel compelled to attack their opponents on a personal level instead of debating the issues at hand. Look at our President- for all the

condemnation and criticism that he has taken over the years he has never stooped so low as to condemn and abash his opponents on a person level.

I personally take issue with your comments that many of the DVM's that are opposed to the bill are misinformed. That is an incredibly condescending statement and goes back to the point that the membership was left out of the communication loop and was never allowed to participate in the discussion. It is obvious that you are backed into a corner and that must be a very uncomfortable feeling. I know that many members are considering dropping their membership as well as insurance. I suppose that you will be happy if the bill passes, but I wonder if the CVMA will be happy with the economic fallout and the negative impact on camaraderie.

If veterinary associations or their representatives express a profound lack of support for CVMA's alliance and co-sponsorship of this bill, and CVMA does not listen, who will they be forced to express their opposition to next? CVMA will be publicly exposed for its lack of judgment and poor representation. It is also very troublesome that there is more and more evidence that the animal rights group PETA have been working behind the scenes in getting this bill passed. That in and of itself, should worry you tremendously as a member of the veterinary profession. Maybe the reference you made to the "stewardship" of animals should be investigated.

as that is a term that the animal rights groups use when pushing the guardianship issue for animals. Guilt by association, I for one do not want to be aligned with either of these groups and would bet that is the consensus of most of the profession locally and nationally.

The proverbial ball is in your court, it always takes a man of integrity to admit error and accept his mistakes. The choice is yours.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly should you wish to discuss this matter further. I look forward to seeing you with the BOG this coming week in Anaheim.

Respectfully,
Karen E. Seibold, DVM, ACVECC
CVMA Delegate San Diego

cc. by fax Dr. Jeff Smith and the BOG, Mark Nunez