



**December  
2008**

# Berner Beat

**“All the Bark Without the Bite”**

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Revised 5/20/08 Bd. Min.  
7/12/08 Board Mtg Minutes  
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## CVMA Warns About Proposed Sales Tax

**G**overnor Schwarzenegger recently announced plans to add a sales tax on veterinary services as part of his budget plan to stimulate the California economy. This was part of a larger combination of program cuts and revenue increases to solve the multi-billion dollar budget shortfall. It is particularly disturbing that veterinary services were included with “appliance and furniture repair, vehicle repair and golf.” All of the other healing arts professions were excluded from the sales tax proposal.

A special session of the Legislature must be convened to approve the governor’s plan. The proposal would need to be approved by the Legislature with a two-thirds majority of both the Assembly and the Senate.

The California Veterinary Medical Association is strongly opposed to this proposal. Our legislative team has been working hard to get sales tax on veterinary services removed from the Governor's proposal. We urge you to write personal letters to the governor, your state representatives and their leadership expressing your concerns. It is easy to do. The CVMA home page ([www.cvma.net](http://www.cvma.net)) provides links to the Legislative Action Center and contact information for your state representatives.

### **CVMA Fact Sheet: Negative Effects of Sales Tax on Veterinary Services**

- ☐ In this weak economy, animal owners are already making tough choices. Adding sales tax to veterinary services will force owners to make difficult choices about the health and welfare of their pets. The result will be that many animals won't get the medical care they need and they will be abandoned or euthanized.
- ☐ Shelter populations are increasing beyond capacity as many Californians lose their homes to foreclosure. If people can't afford to take care of their pets, they may be forced to abandon them to shelters, adding to the overcrowding and financial strain.
- ☐ More than 800,000 cats and dogs enter California shelters every year at a cost to taxpayers of \$275 million. As shelters become filled beyond capacity, more healthy animals will be euthanized adding to the emotional strain of shelter workers.
- ☐ Food production animals require veterinary care. A sales tax on veterinary services will increase the cost of food production, which will ultimately be passed on to consumers further adding to the already high cost of food.
- ☐ Veterinary medical care shouldn't be taxed any differently than human medical care.
- ☐ Veterinarians are clearly health care professionals and are subject to many of the same laws and regulations as other health care providers. Veterinary medicine should not be singled out for this tax.
- ☐ It is an insult to the veterinary profession to compare veterinary medical services with appliance and furniture repair.
- ☐ It's not right for our beloved pets to suffer because of the state's financial problems.

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