

**Colorado's current VCPR definition is the same as the FDA's – HB 1048 is *more restrictive* than federal government requirements\***

**FDA definition of a valid VCPR:**

A *valid veterinarian-client-patient relationship* is one in which:

- (1) A veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of (an) animal(s) and the need for medical treatment, and the client (the owner of the animal or animals or other caretaker) has agreed to follow the instructions of the veterinarian.
- (2) There is sufficient knowledge of the animal(s) by the veterinarian to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal(s); and
- (3) The practicing veterinarian is readily available for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of therapy. Such a relationship can exist only when the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal(s) by virtue of examination of the animal(s), and/or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal(s) are kept.

21 CFR 530.5(i)

**Colorado definition of a valid VCPR:**

(15.5) "Veterinarian-client-patient relationship" means that relationship established when:

- (a) The veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of an animal and the need for medical treatment, and the owner or other caretaker has agreed to follow the instruction of the veterinarian;
- (b) There is sufficient knowledge of an animal by the veterinarian to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal, which means that the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal by virtue of an examination of the animal or by medically appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal is kept; and
- (c) The practicing veterinarian is readily available, or has arranged for emergency coverage, for follow-up evaluation in the event of adverse reactions or failure of the treatment regimen.

CRS § 12-64-103 (2018)





## Potential Policy/Program Solution #3: Expanding the Use of Telemedicine

### Background:

- To address veterinary workforce and access to care challenges, some have proposed expanding the use of telemedicine through providing education and resources to veterinary professionals and/or policy focused on increasing the types of procedures/tasks performed using telehealth. For example, in May 2023, Senate Bill 1053 was signed into law in Arizona which allows veterinarians licensed in Arizona to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine. The survey therefore asked about veterinary professionals' and pet owners' current use of telemedicine and their support of potential policies and programs focused on telemedicine.

### Findings from the Veterinary Professional Survey on this Potential Policy/Program:

- **The majority (63%) of respondents somewhat or strongly believed that expanding the use of telemedicine would increase access to veterinary care for underserved populations.** More than half (51%) never used telemedicine or used telemedicine less than once a month, and the most common way telemedicine was currently used was for follow-up.
- **Respondents shared a variety of barriers preventing full implementation of telemedicine in their practice.** Confusion over how to implement/charge for telemedicine was the most common barrier (reported by 40% of respondents) followed by the need for technology (34%) and acceptance of telemedicine/training of personnel in how to use telemedicine (31%).
- **More respondents believed that a law allowing veterinarians to establish a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine would be beneficial for the profession and for increasing the amount of care that veterinary professionals could provide to underserved populations.** Specifically, 43% of respondents reported that they believed a law similar to Arizona's would have a slight, moderate, or strong positive impact on the profession while 39% reported that they believed it would have a slight, moderate, or strong negative impact on the profession. 52% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that the ability to establish a virtual veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine would increase the amount of care that veterinary professionals could provide to underserved populations.
- **Veterinary technicians and those working in corporate practices reported the most positive beliefs towards establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) through telemedicine.** Specifically, 46% of technicians, 38% of DVMs, and 38% of practice owners/managers reported that they believed a law similar to Arizona's would have a slight, moderate, or strong positive impact on the profession. 47% of those in corporate practice, 37% of those in private practice, and 33% of those in non-profit practices reported that they believed a law similar to Arizona's would have a slight, moderate, or strong positive impact on the profession.
- **When asked what resources would help veterinary professionals better integrate telemedicine in their practice, answers included:** Training on implementation process and technology; legal clarification about establishing a VCPR, prescribing or engaging in other tasks via telemedicine; platforms that can be used to easily charge for telemedicine and integrate video chat; grant funds for technology; case studies of practices.



## Potential Policy/Program Solution #3: Expanding the Use of Telemedicine

### Findings from the Online Pet Owner Survey on this Potential Policy/Program:

- **The majority of pet owners feel comfortable with telemedicine.** Approximately 73% of pet owners felt comfortable seeing a veterinarian through a telemedicine appointment.
- **Many pet owners would feel comfortable establishing a VCPR through telemedicine.** 74% of those who feel comfortable with telemedicine would also feel comfortable seeing a veterinarian for the first time via a virtual telemedicine visit.
- **Telemedicine would motivate the majority of pet owners to contact a veterinarian.** 64% of pet owners reported that it would somewhat or greatly increase their likelihood of contacting a veterinarian.
- **Knowing the types of services that can be done through telemedicine would make 72% of pet owners feel more comfortable with it.** The majority (54%) of pet owners would also like to know the cost of a telemedicine appointment versus an in-person appointment, and over a third (40%) of pet owners would like a guide on what is needed and how to use the technology for a telemedicine appointment.
- **56% of pet owners reported that the availability of telemedicine options, where you can meet with a veterinarian on a phone/video rather than going to a clinic in person would be “very” or “extremely helpful.”**

### Findings from the In-Person Pet Owner Survey on this Potential Policy/Program:

- **75% of pet owners reported that the availability of telemedicine options, where you can meet with a veterinarian on a phone/video rather than going to a clinic in person would be “very” or “extremely helpful.”**

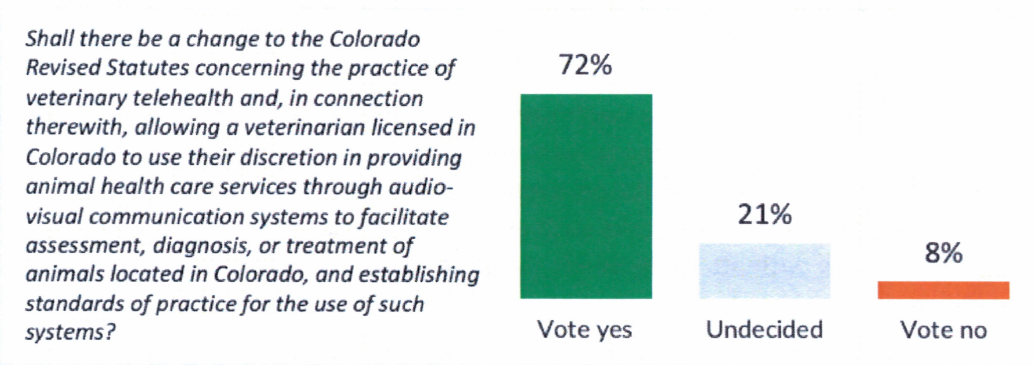
**From:** Chris Keating and Jake Martin, Keating Research  
**To:** Interested Parties  
**Subject:** New Poll Results:  
Veterinarian Care Ballot Measures Receive Widespread Support  
**Date:** January 10, 2024



In a new Keating Research poll of 800 likely November 2024 voters in Colorado, a pair of ballot measures to improve access to veterinary care are supported by wide margins. Voters consistently line up to support both measures, with 72% supporting the ballot measure to expand Veterinary Tele-Health and 65% supporting the ballot measure to establish the Veterinary Professional Associate position. Both proposals also face extremely low opposition, as fewer than 10% say they will vote no on the measures.

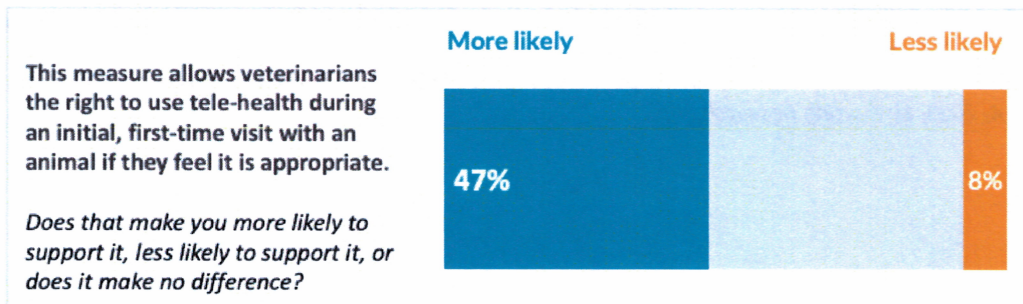
### More Than 7-of-10 Voters Support a Ballot Measure to Expand Veterinary Tele-Health

The proposed ballot question to expand veterinary tele-health has broad support with 72% of likely voters saying they will vote yes, while just 8% would vote no and 21% are undecided. This ballot question is a non-partisan issue that has sweeping support from at least two-thirds of voters in all parties, including 78% of Democrats, 70% of Unaffiliated and 67% of Republicans. The robust support extends across all other demographic groups, including among voters with pets (74% vote yes) and those without pets (65% vote yes).



Support for this proposal grows significantly stronger when respondents were provided a simplified description of the ballot question: 86% said they will support “a state law providing pet owners with a legal option to use tele-health, through video services such as FaceTime or Zoom, to begin a relationship with a veterinarian who is licensed in Colorado.”

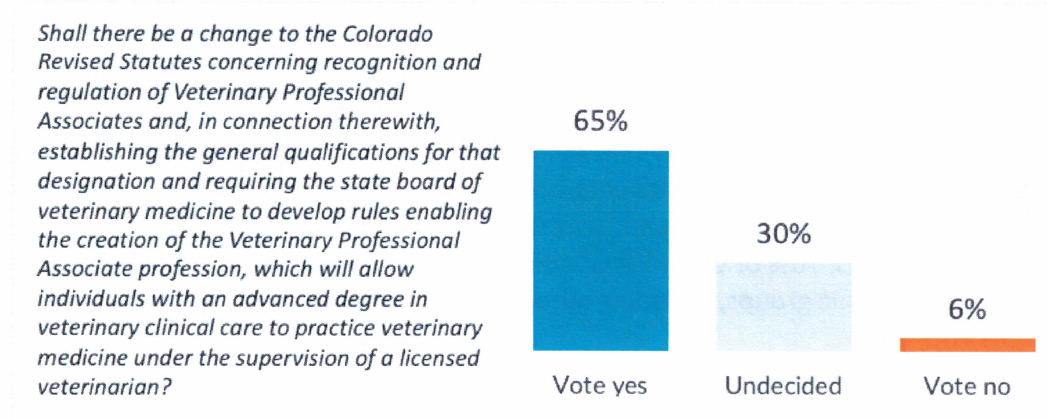
A critical element of this proposal is to expand the use of veterinary tele-health so that veterinarians can use tele-health for initial, first-time visits with an animal. Nearly half of voters (47%) say that policy makes them more likely to support this measure, while just 8% say it would make them less likely to do so.



## Establishing the Veterinary Professional Associate Position Is Supported by 65% of Voters

A second proposed ballot question, which establishes the Veterinary Professional Associate position (VPA), is supported by a ten-to-one margin: 65% voting yes, while just 6% say they will vote no and 30% are undecided.

This proposal also enjoys broad support and is viewed as a non-partisan issue, receiving support across all political parties: more than 3-of-5 Democrats (67%), Unaffiliated (64%), and Republicans (65%) say they will vote yes on this ballot question. Majority support is found across all other demographic groups, including 65% of people with pets and 63% of people without pets saying they will vote yes on the Veterinary Professional Associate ballot question.



When voters are provided a simple, plain language description of this proposal, undecided voters break in favor of the policy with overall support increasing to 84%, while just 7% say they would oppose “a state law establishing the Veterinary Professional Associate profession, which would allow people with a master’s degree in veterinary care to carry out tasks such as routine check-ups, minor conditions, performing procedures, and treating patients while under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.”

**Bottom line:** Both measures are well-positioned to earn strong support from voters in the November election. Voters of all types support these ballot questions – including voters across party lines, voters with pets and those without, and voters across all demographic groups and regions. Meanwhile, opposition to these ballot measures is rare as fewer than 1-of-10 voters say they would vote no on these proposals. In fact, support for these measures only grows stronger as voters learn more about the policy.

*These results are based on a hybrid poll of 800 likely November 2024 voters in Colorado, including 400 respondents contacted on the phone via live interviewers and 400 surveys completed among an online panel. The sample is distributed to accurately represent likely 2024 voters in Colorado based on party registration, gender, age, region, and education. The worst-case margin of error at the 95% level for the full sample of 800 respondents is plus or minus 3.5%. The poll was conducted from November 27 - December 4, 2023, by Keating Research, Inc.*