

SENATE No. 1353

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

James T. Welch

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to establish a subsidiary board for veterinary technology.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>James T. Welch</i>	<i>Hampden</i>	
<i>Thomas M. Stanley</i>	<i>9th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/31/2019</i>

SENATE No. 1353

By Mr. Welch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 1353) of James T. Welch and Thomas M. Stanley for legislation to establish a subsidiary board for veterinary technology. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act to establish a subsidiary board for veterinary technology.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Findings. The General Court finds:

2 (1) That veterinary technicians are integral members of a veterinary team; and

3 (2) That veterinary technicians provide consumer protection, public health and safety in
4 veterinary offices and in other areas of animal medical care and welfare; and

5 (3) That it is in the best interest of the Commonwealth to promote the advancement of
6 veterinary technicians, their management and professionalism so far as possible making
7 use of existing accredited private and public training already in use in the Commonwealth or
8 elsewhere for their oversight.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 13 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition,
10 is hereby amended by inserting after section 26 of chapter 13 the following new section: -

11 SECTION 26A.

12 Subsidiary Board for Veterinary Technology under the Board of Registration in
13 Veterinary Medicine.

14 Section 1. When used in this act these words and phrases shall be defined as follows:

15 1. Veterinary Technology, the science and art of providing professional support to
16 veterinarians.

17 2. Veterinary technician, a graduate of an American Veterinary Medical Association-
18 accredited program in veterinary technology or nursing;

19 3. Veterinary Assistant, is the title sometimes used for individuals where training,
20 knowledge, and skills are less than that required for identification as a veterinary technician.

21 Section 2. There shall be a subsidiary board for veterinary technology under the Board of
22 Registration in Veterinary Medicine, in sections twenty-seven and twenty-eight called the
23 subsidiary board. In said subsidiary board four members will be appointed by the Executive
24 board of the Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association. The subsidiary technician board
25 should consist of two veterinarian members of the Board of Registration in Veterinary Medicine,
26 four technician members appointed by the Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association and
27 one public member.

28 The subsidiary technician board is subject to the Board of Registration, its
29 recommendations or decisions are subject to approval by the full Board. Each member of said
30 board shall be a legal resident of the commonwealth. Each veterinary technician member shall be
31 licensed to practice veterinary technology in the commonwealth. The technicians initially

32 appointed to the technician board by the Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association
33 should be Massachusetts Veterinary Technician Association -accredited technicians and the
34 initial appointments should be for no more than two years. During the initial two years, rules and
35 procedures for technician licensure will be established by the technician board: after those rules
36 are established, each veterinary technician member shall be a Massachusetts licensed veterinary
37 technician.

38 The subsidiary technician board shall determine and establish the criteria and regulations
39 by which veterinary technicians shall be licensed and registered in the Commonwealth of
40 Massachusetts subject to approval by the Board of Registration.

41 The subsidiary board of veterinary technology under the Board of Registration of
42 Veterinary Medicine shall establish the duties which supervising, Massachusetts-licensed
43 veterinarians may assign to licensed veterinary technicians, and to non-licensed veterinary
44 assistants, consistent with good veterinary medical practice in the best interests of Massachusetts
45 consumers. The subsidiary board shall be entitled to change or alter the duties and rights granted
46 to licensed veterinary technicians and veterinary assistants as deemed necessary or appropriate
47 by the subsidiary board to reflect changes in the practice of veterinary technology over time. The
48 board shall also stipulate explicit differences in the duties and actions allowed for by licensed
49 veterinary technicians and unlicensed veterinary assistants.

50 Section 3. Board Rule Promulgation

51 The subsidiary board is hereby directed to craft appropriate regulations to govern the
52 practice of veterinary technicians and assistants. The board will establish criteria for licensure of
53 technicians, and for the maintenance, suspension or revocation of licenses. Any grandfather

54 clause that allows currently working or credentialed technicians to become licensed
55 automatically or via a tiered system that allows for licensure without a formal degree in
56 veterinary technology shall have an end date to be determined by the subsidiary board.

57 This section shall not apply to veterinary technicians employed by a research institution
58 as defined in Section 136A of Chapter 140. The activities of employed veterinarians and
59 veterinary technicians in those institutions shall uphold the rules governing those institutions.
60 Veterinary students and veterinary technician students working under the supervision of a
61 Massachusetts licensed veterinarian or Massachusetts licensed veterinary technician may engage
62 in those necessary activities to learn and practice supervised techniques on living patients. The
63 subsidiary board may add additional categories of individuals who may engage in those
64 necessary activities to learn and practice supervised techniques of living patients

65 Section 4. The subsidiary board may promulgate regulations requiring veterinary
66 technicians to have professional malpractice liability insurance or a suitable bond or other
67 indemnity against liability for professional malpractice in such amounts as may be determined by
68 the board.

69 Section 5. The regulation promulgated under section fifty-nine of chapter one hundred
70 and twelve shall not apply to individual veterinary technicians or assistants who are (a) governed
71 or regulated by United States Department of Agriculture and the Association for Assessment and
72 Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care accredited research institutions. and, (b) special cases,
73 including veterinary technicians or assistants working with zoos and aquaria, shelters, diagnostic
74 facilities, licensed wildlife rehabilitation facilities and other such special cases as the subsidiary

75 board shall identify. In general, these regulations shall consider the special circumstances of
76 these types of practice.

77 Section 6. The board shall establish the criteria by which a veterinary technician is
78 deemed licensed or non-licensed. Licensed veterinary technicians shall be required to have an
79 associate or bachelor degree in veterinary technology from an institution that has been accredited
80 or provisionally accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

81 All non-licensed veterinary technicians must receive a formal degree in veterinary
82 technology from an institution accredited or provisionally accredited by the American Veterinary
83 Medical Association. All employed, non-licensed veterinary technicians who have not received
84 or enrolled to obtain a formal degree in veterinary technology, in accordance with the regulations
85 set by the board, by the first of January five years from passage of this bill shall be prohibited
86 from the duties specifically restricted to licensed veterinary technicians but can perform the
87 duties allowed to veterinary assistants. The subsidiary board shall establish a requirement for
88 continuing education for licensed veterinary technicians, commencing five years from the
89 passage of this bill. The subsidiary board shall also be authorized to suspend or revoke a
90 veterinary technicians license at the board's unanimous discretion for failure to abide by the
91 Massachusetts General Laws, Massachusetts regulations, or any ordinance imposed by the Board
92 of

93 Registration in Veterinary Medicine.