

Public Health Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-190 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN FOREIGN-EDUCATED VETERINARIANS TO

Title: PRACTICE UNDER A TEMPORARY PERMIT.

Vote Date: 3/2/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/18/2026

File No.: 27

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Public Health Committee.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Connecticut is suffering from a Type III shortage of Public Practice Veterinarians which are essential to maintaining public health, mitigating the spread of zoonotic diseases, and ensuring food security through treating pets and managing livestock. Effective October 1, 2026, this bill would allow the Department of Public Health (DPH) to issue a temporary permit to veterinary applicants who are foreign educated. The intent of these temporary permits is to allow foreign-educated veterinarians to practice for one year in the United States only under direct supervision of a veterinarian who has been licensed under chapter 384 for no less than four years. For purposes of this bill, "foreign educated" is defined as a graduate from a school located outside of the United States, its territories or Canada. Prior to the introduction of this bill, the DPH could only issue licensure to veterinarians who practice and are licensed in some other state or territory. This bill also adds provisions for veterinary telehealth. If an animal is in urgent need of treatment that will take up to 14 days, this visit may occur through telehealth provided that an in-person exam of the animal occurs within 14 days.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

The substitute language (1) extends the duration of the temporary permit from one year to two years and allows for a one-time renewal and (2) adds provisions on veterinary telehealth.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Bryan Hurlburt, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture:

Connecticut's Department of Agriculture licenses over 200,000 dogs annually which is a small fraction of the animals needing veterinary care. The demand for large and exotic animal care is even greater. Connecticut is suffering from a Type III shortage of Public Practice Veterinarians as it faces a growing need for support with veterinary care. Type III

veterinarians commit at least 49% of their time to public service work with the goal of supporting the shortage of veterinarians in our state. In 2025, the CT Dept. Of Agriculture's Low-Income Spay/Neuter program received over 1,300 applications and were only able to offer 200 vouchers within the 7 days that the program was open.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Michelle Forella, DVM, Licensed Veterinarian and Immediate Past-President of the CT Veterinary Medical Association:

Ms. Forella testified in general support of the spirit and intent of this bill by highlighting that access to veterinary services in Connecticut is lacking and this bill will work to address that. However, she pointed out inconsistencies in the bill's phrase: "*from a program acceptable to the American Veterinary Medical Association as required to receive certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates*" as Schools of Veterinary Medicine are not "acceptable" or "unacceptable" to the AVMA but are either accredited or unaccredited.

Hashim Ali, Business Development Manager, Vet for Pet Animal Hospital:

The growing shortage of veterinarians in Connecticut results in longer wait times, staff burn-out and puts a strain on accessibility to veterinary services. Mr. Ali expressed that there are many qualified veterinarians in Connecticut who are unable to practice for multiple years without accreditation through the Education Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) or Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) programs. S.B. 190 would allow said professionals to practice under supervision during that time, maintain professionalism and work to address the gaps the shortage has caused. At least nine states have enacted legislation like this bill and have seen positive outcomes.

Ahmad N. Ali, DVM, MS, PhD, Founder / Veterinarian at Vet for Pet Animal Hospital:

The shortage of veterinarians in Connecticut results in longer wait times for appointments, strain on existing veterinarian staff, and reduces rural accessibility to veterinary services. This shortage also affects animal welfare, public health, and the sustainability of farms and other animal-related businesses throughout Connecticut. The number of pets in Connecticut is growing, causing more of a strain on veterinarian professionals. Foreign trained Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree holders are extremely qualified, they just haven't completed the multi-step U.S. licensing process which can take years to complete. Issuing temporary licenses can ease the strain on existing veterinarians, increase appointment availability, and support large animal services. Other states have implemented legislation like this bill and have proven to form a pathway to better veterinary services.

The following submitted testimony like that expressed above in support of the bill:

- Katie Jarl, Partnership for Expanded Telemedicine Services
- Jennifer Hobgood, Senior Director, ASPCA

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Abbygail Shaw

Date: March 11, 2026