



April, 2011

SB 2 Chamberlain's Law

The bill is dead for this year. On April 4 SB 2 was withdrawn from committee and sent back to Rules. Companion bill HB 426 is not expected to advance.

HB 610 Farm Animal Confinement

Representatives Pricey Harrison (Guilford) and Paul Luebke (Durham) continued to show support for HSUS animal rights initiatives as primary sponsors of a bill which would prohibit confinement of any calf raised for veal, egg-laying hen, or swine during pregnancy, on a farm, for all or the majority of any day. Similar bills and/or ballot initiatives have been campaigned by HSUS in other states – most notably California's Prop 2 and the Ohio ballot initiative. HB 610 was referred to Rules and is not expected to be assigned to a committee. Other farm animal confinement bills have been introduced this year in CT, FL, MA, and OR. HSUS is gathering signatures for a ballot initiative in the state of Washington which would require all egg production to be cage free.

New Law: A Service Animal Can Be Dog or Mini-Horse

By SUE MANNING - Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Dani Moore uses a rat perched on her shoulder as a service animal to alert her to spasms from a disabling condition. Daniel Greene's service animal is a snake wrapped around his neck to help him predict epileptic seizures.

But these creatures and many others are no longer acceptable as service animals under new federal guidelines issued March 15 by the U.S. Department of Justice for the Americans with Disabilities Act. The new recommendations limit service animals to dogs and housebroken miniature horses.

The new guidelines are not binding to states, municipalities and other agencies, which are free to adopt the policy or to make their own. But individuals who rely on other types of animals to help them manage physical disabilities and conditions are worried.

The law used to say a service animal could be any animal trained to do a task for an individual, said Don Brandon, director of the Northwest Americans with Disabilities Act Center in Seattle. The new policy allowing only dogs and the miniature horses "excludes automatically yard animals, rodents, spiders, snakes, monkeys and cats," Brandon said. Service animals also exclude animals that provide emotional support or comfort, he said.

The DOJ decided to revise its service animal regulation because of comments from businesses, state and local governments and individuals with disabilities, including several who use service animals, department spokesman Xochitl Hinojosa said.

People were putting vests on pocket pets and calling them service animals, Brandon said. "Changes were needed." Full story: Federal News Radio <http://www.wfed.com/?nid=408&sid=2327831>

“Sniffing Out” Lymphoma Genes by Turning Dogs into Humans

Release Date: 04.08.2011 Researchers at North Carolina State University are narrowing the search for genes involved in non-Hodgkin lymphoma – by turning dogs into humans.

Humans and dogs don't just share companionship and living space, they also share a similar genetic makeup. Additionally, they share the same types of cancer, including lymphoma. Dr. Matthew Breen, professor of genomics at NC State, uses canines as a genetic model for studying lymphoma because purebred dogs of the same breed have less genetic variation among them than humans do, making it easier to pinpoint areas on canine chromosomes that may be involved with cancer.

In a paper published in the journal *Leukemia and Lymphoma*, Breen's team took the genetic information from dogs with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and then rearranged or “recoded” the genomes of the dogs so that, genomically speaking, they were human. The researchers then compared the recoded canine genomes with those of humans with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, to see which chromosomes were involved with the cancer in both humans and canines.

“This is the first time that we were able to compare this information from dogs with lymphoma directly with existing data from human patients diagnosed with the equivalent cancer and using the same technique,” says Dr. Rachael Thomas, research assistant professor of molecular biomedical sciences at NC State and lead author of the paper.

The data revealed that there were only a few genes involved with lymphoma that were shared by dogs and humans. This is in contrast to current research into human lymphoma, where numerous genes have been identified as possibly having a relationship to the cancer. Breen and his colleagues hope that this data will point researchers toward the most likely genetic culprits.

“In essence, we stripped the background noise from the human data,” Breen says. “Lymphoma genomics is a lot more complex in human patients than in dog patients. This study tells us that while both humans? and dogs? have comparable disease at the clinical and cellular level, the genetic changes associated with the same cancers are much less complex in the dog. This suggests that maybe there is a lot of genetic noise in the human cancers that are not essential components of the process. While human studies have been looking in numerous places in the genome, the dog data indicate we need to focus on what's shared, and these are very few regions.”

The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation. The Department of Molecular Biomedical Sciences is part of NC State's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Vaccine to Treat Cat Allergy Sufferers Developed

Medical News Today. Article Date: 31 Mar 2011. Good-bye itching, watering eyes and sneezing. McMaster University researchers have developed a vaccine which successfully treats people with an allergy to cats.

Traditionally, frequent allergy shots have been considered the most effective way to bring relief - other than getting rid of the family pet -- for the eight to 10% of the population allergic to cats.

Both options - one difficult and costly, the other troubling - may now be tossed aside thanks to the work of immunologist Mark Larché, professor in the Department of Medicine in the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine and Canada Research Chair in Allergy & Immune Tolerance.

Building on research he's conducted for the past 10 years in Canada and Britain, Larché and his research team have developed a vaccine which is effective and safe with almost no side effects. The research is published in a recent (January 2011) issue of the *Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology*, a leading journal in the allergy field.

The researchers took one protein (molecule) that cats secrete on their fur which causes the majority of allergic problems. Using blood samples from 100 patient volunteers allergic to cats, they deconstructed the molecule and identified short regions within the protein which activate T-cells (helper cells that fight infection) in the immune system.

Using the amino acid code for the whole protein, researchers made synthetic versions of these regions. For the cat allergy vaccine, they found seven peptides (strings of amino acids). "And those synthetic peptides are what we mix together to make the vaccine," said Larché. "We picked the peptides that would work in as much of the population as possible."

Known as "peptide immunotherapy", a low dose of the vaccine is given into the skin. Initially, four to eight doses a year may be required, but the side effects of the traditional allergy shots do not arise, Larché said. The optimal dose will be determined in phase three clinical trials which are getting underway with a much larger group of cat allergy sufferers.

The development of a vaccine to treat people allergic to cats is the first in a line of vaccines developed with Adiga Life Sciences, a company established at McMaster in 2008. It is a joint venture between McMaster University and Circassia Ltd., a UK-based biotech company.

Adiga and McMaster are now collaborating on research into the use of peptide immunotherapy for house dust mite, ragweed, grass, birch tree and moulds. *Source: McMaster University*

NC Vet School Unveils New Animal Medical Center

The Randall B. Terry, Jr. Companion Animal Veterinary Medical Center fulfills Mr. Terry's vision of creating a "national model of excellence" in specialty companion animal health care. Some 12 years in the planning and development, the \$72 million Terry Center complex is made possible by the philanthropist's \$20 million bequest, appropriations from the 2006 North Carolina General Assembly, and ongoing private donations that continued to be matched by the R.B. Terry, Jr. Charitable Foundation.

With a focus on patient care, client comfort, and staff efficiency, the Randall B. Terry, Jr. Companion Animal Veterinary Medical Center is dedicated to exceeding client and referring veterinarian expectations for compassionate, state-of-the-art specialty health care.

The Terry Center, at 110,000-square feet, is one of the nation's largest veterinary hospitals and is more than twice the size of the original Small Animal Veterinary Teaching Hospital. When it began operating in 1983, the VTH had a planned capacity of 12,000 cases. Today our clinicians annually examine, diagnose, and treat more than 20,000 small animal patients referred to them by private practice veterinarians.

Veterinary medicine has experienced dramatic changes since 1983, including the growth of specialties and sub-specialties. The Terry Center is designed to meet the requirements of specialization and associated state of the art technologies. The heart of the new center remains an outstanding medical community that includes 123 faculty, 83 house officers (interns and residents), some 115 students, and 179 staff members—all dedicated to working with partner veterinarians and ensuring the health and well-being of companion animals.

More at The Terry Center website: <http://www.cvm.ncsu.edu/terrycenter/>

Missouri Legislators Strengthen Animal Welfare Law

Missouri Farmers Care, a coalition of leading Missouri agriculture advocacy groups, applauds the Missouri General Assembly's efforts last week to pass Senate Bill 113. The group noted that it will strengthen the enforcement of Missouri's animal welfare laws and preserves the voter intent of the recently passed Proposition B.

SB 113 requires dog breeders to work with licensed veterinarians to ensure their animals receive proper care and exercise. SB 113 also eliminates a controversial section buried within Proposition B that would have allowed animal rights groups to interfere with animal agriculture in Missouri, according to Missouri Farmers Care coalition. Proposition B's main proponent, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), is an animal rights activist group that has successfully pushed anti-farming legislation in several states since 2002, including Florida, Arizona and California.

"SB 113 makes important improvements in the care of dogs and helps protect Missouri farmers from radical animal rights groups whose agenda is to create controversy, raise huge sums of money and support efforts to ultimately end livestock farming," Missouri veterinarian Dr. Alan Wessler said. "Groups like HSUS and PETA clearly intended to use Proposition B as a Trojan horse that would allow them to come in later and attack Missouri farmers like they have done in several other states. Now, that won't happen."

SB 113 was sponsored by State Senator Mike Parson (R-Bolivar) and handled in the House by Representative Tom Loehner (R-Koeltztown). *Source: Missouri Farmers Care press release*

Farm Sanctuary's Gene Baur Speaks about Animal Rights

Gene Baur was invited to speak to Dr. Carrie Freeman's Environmental Communication class at Georgia State University as part of the activities surrounding Earth Week.

"Killing animals is wrong," says Baur of Farm Sanctuary. Baur, speaking to Dr. Freeman's class, was making the point that humans raising animals and killing them for food is unethical, as well as a bad use of the earth's resources.

Baur told how he had been active in the animal rights movement for more than 25 years, starting in Orland, California. Baur's group has gotten laws passed in Florida to prohibit the raising of pigs in factories and in Washington to insure free-range status for hens. Farm Sanctuary believes that raising animals for food is an inefficient use of the earth's resources.

According to Baur, "commodifying and slaughtering sentient animals is incompatible with the definition of 'humane'." "I'd love to wave a magic wand and wake up in a vegan world tomorrow, but unfortunately, societal change usually happens incrementally, over time. We need to be patient and persistent. Welfare reforms assert that animals have feelings and interests that need to be taken into consideration. I think the logical extension of this attitude leads to veganism."

Sources: GSU Signal; Transcript of Gene Baur's ARZone Guest Chat

Protecting your right to responsibly own and breed animals.

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For more information on animal health, training, reports on pet issues, animal sheltering, or to learn the difference between animal welfare and animal rights – visit our website at www.ncraoa.com

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