

SENATOR SCOTT WILK
SENATE DISTRICT 21



FACT SHEET: SENATE BILL 202

ISSUE

Animal blood banks help provide veterinarians with products needed for transfusions. Current state law limits the supply of these lifesaving products by preventing blood collection from community-based banks. Every other state allows for the commercial use of blood from community-based banks, but California prevents it.

California currently suffers from a shortage of animal blood, which is desperately needed for life-saving transfusions. SB 202 clarifies statute to allow for community-based animal blood banks – providing a new, abundant supply of blood for veterinarians.

BACKGROUND

Cal. Food and Agricultural Code § 9201 *et seq.* requires that anyone producing animal blood and blood component products for retail sale and distribution be licensed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (“the Department”). The Department’s interpretation of current law requires that animals be held in these banks until they are no longer viable for blood collection purposes.

A study published in the *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* concluded, “community-based canine volunteer donor programs for animal blood banks can be successful while maintaining high safety standards and ethical treatment of volunteers.” The Veterinary Blood Bank at the University of California Davis—exempt from current law—is a community-based donation program that allows privately-owned community dogs to donate blood. Dogs brought in by their owners give blood two or three times a year and receive free veterinary care. According to its director, Dr. Sean Owens, “[t]here is enough evidence out there, both in the human and

veterinary literature, to suggest [blood collection] can be done very safely in an open colony.”

Existing law mandates that animal blood banks be operated under the oversight of a licensed veterinarian. SB 202 will keep this requirement for community-sourced blood banks, ensuring a completely safe and regulated environment for all community animal donors. The bill will also introduce new requirements for blood-borne pathogen testing for all animal donors, and will require blood banks keep their records open to the California Department of Food and Agriculture subject to the California Public Records Act.

BILL SUMMARY

- Permit collection and sale of blood from community-sourced animals, which are animals who live with private owners.
- Require that veterinarians oversee all blood banks for animals, and mandate blood-borne pathogen testing of all canine and feline blood donors
- Make most records related to commercial blood banks for animals available to the public

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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