

I am writing to express my strong disapproval of the proposal to remove the sales tax exemption from veterinary services. This change will unfairly punish middle and lower income households, negatively impact pet health in the state and will make it more difficult to protect public health.

Over half of the households in the state of Connecticut own a pet and the majority of them are middle and lower income families. This proposed change will add an unfair tax burden and in effect, creates a penalty for having a pet and providing medical care.

Veterinary care is paid for through discretionary income, there is no Medicaid or Medicare. Everyday pet owners have to balance their financial needs and the needs of their pets. This new tax will create more situations in which people will have to forego care for their companions because of the increased costs.

Veterinary medicine provides a barrier for diseases like rabies and parasitic infections from reaching the general public. This is accomplished by getting pet owners to vaccinate their pets and treat them for parasitic infections. If pet owners cannot afford these services in the future, this will allow for more of these diseases to reach the human population.

The effects of this proposal have not been clearly thought out. The balancing of a budget by punishing Connecticut pet owners for trying to provide care to their beloved pets is wrong. This sales tax proposal should be eliminated immediately.

Sincerely,  
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