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To the editor:

This past Friday, August 1, President Obama signed into law the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act, which allows veterinarians to transport medicines classified as “controlled substances”.

Maine’s veterinarians would like to thank Senator Angus King for being an original sponsor of this measure, making sure we are not classified as felons when visiting a farm or making a house call. We also thank Senator Collins for joining as a co-sponsor.

Until now, any veterinarian transporting these “controlled substances” outside of their practice building was technically committing a federal crime.

The absurdity of this interpretation came to light several years ago, at a regional veterinary meeting held every September in Portland. Federal officials at that meeting advised a veterinarian located in Rhode Island that she was violating the law when taking certain medicines from her practice to her many horse farm clients in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The veterinarians present asked their national organization, the American Veterinary Medical Association, to look into this issue. Upon doing so, the AVMA was told by federal authorities that not only was it illegal to transport these medicines across state lines; it was illegal to transport these medicines at all.

Senator King was quick to join with Senator Moran of Kansas in sponsoring the corrective legislation which has now become law. We value his initiative, and Senator Collins’ support.

Brian Graves, DVM

President, Maine Veterinary Medical Association