

Monday, May 25, 2015

Dear Ms. Maria Hernandez,

My name is Stephanie Globerman. I am a feline exclusive veterinarian in the state of Georgia since 2002. I am the owner of a feline exclusive practice in Ga since 2006. I graduated from the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1999. I am also the Ga co-director for the international organization called The Paw Project which opposes declawing. The Paw Project has members in Oregon. I am writing regarding the public hearing in the Oregon senate in Salem tomorrow, Tuesday, May 26, 2015.

The goal of The Paw Project is to ban declawing in the United States the way it is in most other countries in the world. We believe there is NEVER a reason to declaw a cat unless it is to remove a digit or digits that are affected with irreversible pathology such a cancer or severe injury. This type of declaw only removes the affected digits for the benefit of the cat's health and well-being.

I understand that Oregon bill HB 3494-A is an attempt to help stop declawing, or at least reduce the frequency with which it occurs. I know that supporters of the bill feel it is a good first step to make declawing difficult to have performed. But as it is currently written, the bill contains a large loophole allowing for declawing as a last resort. I would rather see this bill not get passed at all if it is not changed to remove all non-therapeutic exceptions to declawing.

If HB 3494-A is passed with its current language, it will provide an opportunity for other states to "copy-cat" the bill (No pun intended!). This will then put into law, that it is ok to declaw cats in certain circumstances. It will be near impossible to then be able to ban this horrific and inhumane procedure that is done purely for the benefit of the human owner. HB 3494-A will also allow California to undo the declaw bans that have been instituted in eight of its counties. These counties do not allow declawing at all, in any circumstances. If California passes a bill similar to HB 3494-A, those counties will be able to declaw due to the loophole that allows it as a last resort which doesn't protect cats.

Declawing does not help keep cats in their homes. In my years of experience, it leads them to a life of chronic pain and discomfort that includes litterbox avoidance since their toes hurt standing on litter. Declawed cats tend to bite since their first line of defense, their claws, have been taken away. If people won't tolerate scratching on their furniture, they definitely will not tolerate biting and/or elimination outside the box.

Most vets do not see the above consequences of declawing since most vets are much more dog focused in their practice and passion. I have heard many vets over the years say that they hate cats and they would be happy if they never saw another one again. Feline exclusive practices like mine exist for a reason. There is no such thing as a dog only vet office, anywhere.

I would be happy to discuss this further if that would be helpful. I can be reached at 770-579-6001.

Kind Regards,

Stephanie Globerman, DVM

Paws Whiskers & Claws, The Feline Hospital

www.pawswhiskersandclaws.com